



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 06737202 3













William Gibson
Rhymes of Royalty.

THE
HISTORY OF ENGLAND
IN VERSE:

FROM THE CONQUEST BY WILLIAM, DUKE OF NORMANDY,
TO THE REIGN OF OUR
MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN QUEEN VICTORIA.

WITH AN APPENDIX, COMPRISING
A SKETCH OF THE CHARACTER OF EACH MONARCH,
AND A SUMMARY OF
THE LEADING EVENTS IN EACH REIGN.

BY S. BLEWETT.

Designed chiefly to assist Young Persons in the Study of History.

LONDON:
GRANT AND GRIFFITH,
SUCCESSORS TO
J. HARRIS, CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

1849.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
744874 A
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1984 L

LONDON :

Printed by S. & J. BENTLEY and HENRY FLET,
Bank of House, Shoe Lane.

Bangkok House, Shoe Lane.

PREFACE.

THE Author of the following outline of the History of England, having been for some years engaged in the tuition of young persons, has invariably observed that descriptions in verse, of past or present events, make an immediate and lasting impression on the memory, whereas, similar subjects in prose are frequently forgotten in the space of a few hours, even by pupils considerably advanced.

With parents and teachers who wish to make the study of history easy and agreeable to youth, it must be an essential object to lay the foundation by such a concise general view, as will open the understanding and pave the way for works of a more elevated and lengthy character.

To facilitate this object, the following little work has been prepared. The principal events in English

History are related, it is hoped, with simplicity, and their connexion preserved with clearness and precision.

The Author has added, by way of Appendix to the Rhymes, a sketch of the character of each monarch, and a brief summary, under separate heads, of the most striking events connected with each reign. Thus he has endeavoured to place the History of England before the youthful reader in such a form as will unite pleasure with instruction, and, at the same time, prove useful as a common-place work to readers of a higher class.

In presenting this little work to the public, the Author, trusts it will be found deserving of their approval and patronage.

LONDON, AUGUST 3, 1849.

William the Conqueror.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1066 TO A.D. 1087.

FROM Normandy DUKE WILLIAM came,
Distinguish'd by the Bastard's name,¹
And on Pevensey's ² sea-wash'd strand
Debark'd his troops, to win the land.
At Hastings Harold³ met the foe,
But England's King was there laid low;
The Conqu'ror WILLIAM gains the day,
And rules the realm with iron sway,
For one and twenty years, till death
In France⁴ arrests the monarch's breath.

¹ He was a natural son of Robert, Duke of Normandy, and succeeded to the dukedom at nine years of age.

² A small bay near Hastings, in Sussex.

³ The last of the Saxon Kings.

⁴ In the Isle of France, his horse started and gave him a bruise, of which he died aged sixty-three years.

William Rufus.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1087 TO A.D. 1100.

WILLIAM, by name of RUFUS¹ known,
The second son, ascends the throne ;
And seiz'd his brother Robert's right,
Who went in mad Crusades² to fight ;
While WILLIAM, not inclin'd to roam,
Possess'd him of the crown at home ;
But thirteen years conclude his reign,
By Tyrell's luckless arrow slain,³
As in New Forest's⁴ ample space
He urg'd the stag in fatal chase.

¹ So called from his red hair.

² Great military expeditions undertaken by the Princes of Europe to drive the infidels from Palestine.

³ He was killed by an accident while hunting.

⁴ The new forest is in Hampshire.

Henry the First.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1100 TO A.D. 1135.

HENRY THE FIRST of warlike deeds,
His brother Rufus now succeeds.
With great success the crown he wore ;
Call'd BEAUCLERC from his learned lore ;
While Robert, from Crusades return'd,
To mount the throne, his birth-right, burn'd ;
But conquer'd with the loss of eyes,
A captive Prince at Cardiff dies.¹
For five-and-thirty years, we 're told,
HENRY did England's sceptre hold.
For his drown'd son,² in sorrow griev'd,
Till sudden death³ his soul reliev'd.

¹ Cardiff Castle, in Wales, where Robert was confined twenty-eight years by his brother Henry.

² His only son, Prince William, was shipwrecked, returning from Normandy to England.

³ The King died suddenly at St. Denis, in Normandy, of a surfeit of lampreys, aged sixty-seven years.

Stephen.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1135 TO A.D. 1154.

STEPHEN of Blois¹ next seiz'd the throne,
Which, with address, he made his own ;
Though Henry order'd by his will,
His daughter Maud² the throne should fill.
The Empress Maud some battles won,
Contending for her youthful son ;
Till 'twas decreed, to end the strife,
STEPHEN should wear the crown for life ;
And nineteen years he wisely reign'd,
When Maud's young son³ the empire gain'd.

¹ Stephen was a nephew of Henry, the late King, being the son of Adela (daughter of William the Conqueror), and the Count de Blois.

² Maud, or Matilda, was Henry's daughter, married to the Emperor Henry V. of Germany.

³ Henry II., A.D. 1154.

Henry the Second.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1154 TO A.D. 1189.

HENRY THE SECOND¹ now appears,
A King for four-and thirty years ;
Reforms the state, curbs monkish pride,
(While Becket² for resistance died,
Who would the regal pow'r pull down,)
Adds Ireland³ to the English crown ;
But grief assails King HENRY's mind,
When Rosamond⁴ her life resign'd ;
And rebel sons⁵ perform their part
To break this royal monarch's heart.

¹ The first of the royal line of the Plantagenets.

² Thomas a-Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, was killed by some adherents of the King, for insolence to that monarch.

³ Henry took part with Dermot, King of Leinster, and so got a footing in Ireland, 1172.

⁴ Fair Rosamond, the King's favourite, said to have been poisoned at Woodstock.

⁵ Henry, his son, who died before him, and Richard and John who succeeded him.

Richard the First.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1189 TO A.D. 1199.

NOW CŒUR-DE-LION¹ RICHARD rose
The FIRST, and terror of his foes.
Of chivalry the pride and boast,
Who conquer'd Saladin's² proud host ;
And made the British name renown'd,
'Midst Saracens on holy ground ;
Returning home,³ base chiefs detain
The King, till ransom broke his chain.
But at the siege of Chaluz kill'd,
His course of honour he fulfill'd.
By Bertram Gourdan's arrow slain,
Ten years conclude his warlike reign.

¹ He was surnamed *Cœur-de-lion*, or the Lion-hearted, from his undaunted bravery.

² Emperor of the Saracens.

³ Returning home in disguise, the Duke of Austria recognised him, and betrayed him to the Emperor, who kept him a prisoner, until he was discovered by the music of his harp, and ransomed.

John.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1199 TO A.D. 1216.

HIS brother JOHN the sway assumes,
And on despotic acts presumes ;
Curs'd with a heart that could not feel,
His nephew's¹ blood defiles his steel.
Against the Church he next contends,
But baffled, to the Pontiff bends ;²
And as a vassal from his hands,
Receives his crown and forfeit lands.
The Barons bold next made him sign
Our MAGNA CHARTA,—shield divine !
This King, for vice and weakness known,
For eighteen years disgrac'd the throne.³

¹ Prince Arthur, whom he had made prisoner in the castle of Falaise.

² John actually did homage to Pope Innocent III. for the crown of England, and signed a paper, resigning England and Ireland to the Holy See.

³ He died at Newark, aged fifty years.

Henry the Third.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1216 TO A.D. 1272.

HENRY THE THIRD his sire succeeds,¹
A Prince of no heroic deeds ;
But weak and vain, to fav'rites prone,
Commotions shook this monarch's throne ;
Ambitious Montford,² every hour
Encroaching on the royal pow'r,
At length the King a pris'ner led ;
Till Glo'ster and Prince Edward fled
To arms ; and Montford, on the plain
Of Evesham,³ was subdu'd, and slain.
This HENRY reign'd, as it appears,
The length of six-and-fifty years.

¹ He began his reign at nine years of age.

² Simon de Montford, Earl of Leicester, the King's brother-in-law.

³ At the battle of Evesham, Leicester placed the King in the front, against his own forces, and he was on the point of being killed, when he exclaimed, "*I am Henry of Winchester your King !*" and he was saved.

Edward the First.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1272 TO A.D. 1307.

EDWARD THE FIRST, who bravely shone
In Palestine,¹ ascends the throne.
He made the Scottish forces yield
To England's arms the conquer'd field;
But stain'd his laurels when he gave
Brave Wallace² an ignoble grave.
The Welch to England's pow'r he broke,³
But Scottish Bruce still spurn'd his yoke.
At length contending health decays,
And dire disease ends EDWARD's days;⁴
Who five-and-thirty years had reign'd,
And well his country's rights maintain'd.

¹ Edward, while in the Holy Land, was wounded in the arm by a poisoned dagger, but his Queen, Eleanor, saved his life by sucking the poison from the wound.

² A brave Scottish patriot, beheaded A.D. 1305.

³ A. D. 1282—3.

⁴ He died at Carlisle, aged sixty-nine years.

Edward the Second.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1307 TO A.D. 1327.

THE SECOND EDWARD rules the realm,
With vice and weakness at the helm ;
By Gavestone, his bold favorite, led,
Till that proud Gascon lost his head ;
While Robert Bruce, at Bannockburn,¹
Gives EDWARD's arms an adverse turn.
The Spencers all his favour shar'd,
Till Civil War its banner rear'd :
The Spencers² fell before the storm,
And captive EDWARD's tortur'd form³
In Berkeley's walls, midst shrieks and tears,
Concludes a reign of twenty years.

¹ This battle was fought A.D. 1315.

² Their chief crime consisted in being favourites.

³ Edward was put to a cruel death by Maltravers and Gournay, his keepers, who passed a red-hot iron into his body.

Edward the Third.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1327 TO A.D. 1377.

EDWARD THE THIRD succeeds his sire,
A Prince possessed of martial fire ;
His manly vigour quickly shows,
Subduing French and Scottish foes ;¹
While his immortal son ² appears
Victor at Cressy ³ and Poitiers,⁴
His gallant Queen defeats with loss
The Scottish King at Neville's Cross.⁵
The people well their rights maintain'd,
And settled Parliaments obtain'd.
Prince Edward dies, his sire declines,
And soon at Richmond life resigns.⁶

¹ At the battle of Halidown-hill the Scots were totally defeated, and Berwick annexed to the English crown.

² Edward the Black Prince.

³ The French lost thirty thousand men.

⁴ John King of France taken prisoner and brought to England, where he died in 1364.

⁵ Near the city of Durham, where David Bruce, King of Scots, was taken prisoner.

⁶ In the fifty-first year of his reign.



Henry the Fourth.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1399 TO A.D. 1413.

WHILE thus unhappy Richard bleeds,
HENRY THE FOURTH, his foe, succeeds,
Of Lancaster's ¹ imperious race.
This proud usurper hurl'd disgrace
On Percy, who procur'd him power ;
But Percy, leagu'ing with Glendower,²
Defy'd the King on Shrewsb'ry's plain,
And there the Percy bold was slain.
This King with sorrow sees his son ³
A course of dissipation run ;
For fourteen years the sceptre sways,
A leprosy then ends his days.⁴

¹ Formerly Earl of Hereford.

² A descendant of the Welsh Princes.

³ Prince Henry, a libertine in his youth, but afterwards reformed. He is represented by Shakspeare as Falstaff's companion.

⁴ He died in the Jerusalem Chamber, at Westminster, of leprosy, in the forty-sixth year of his age.

Henry the Fifth.

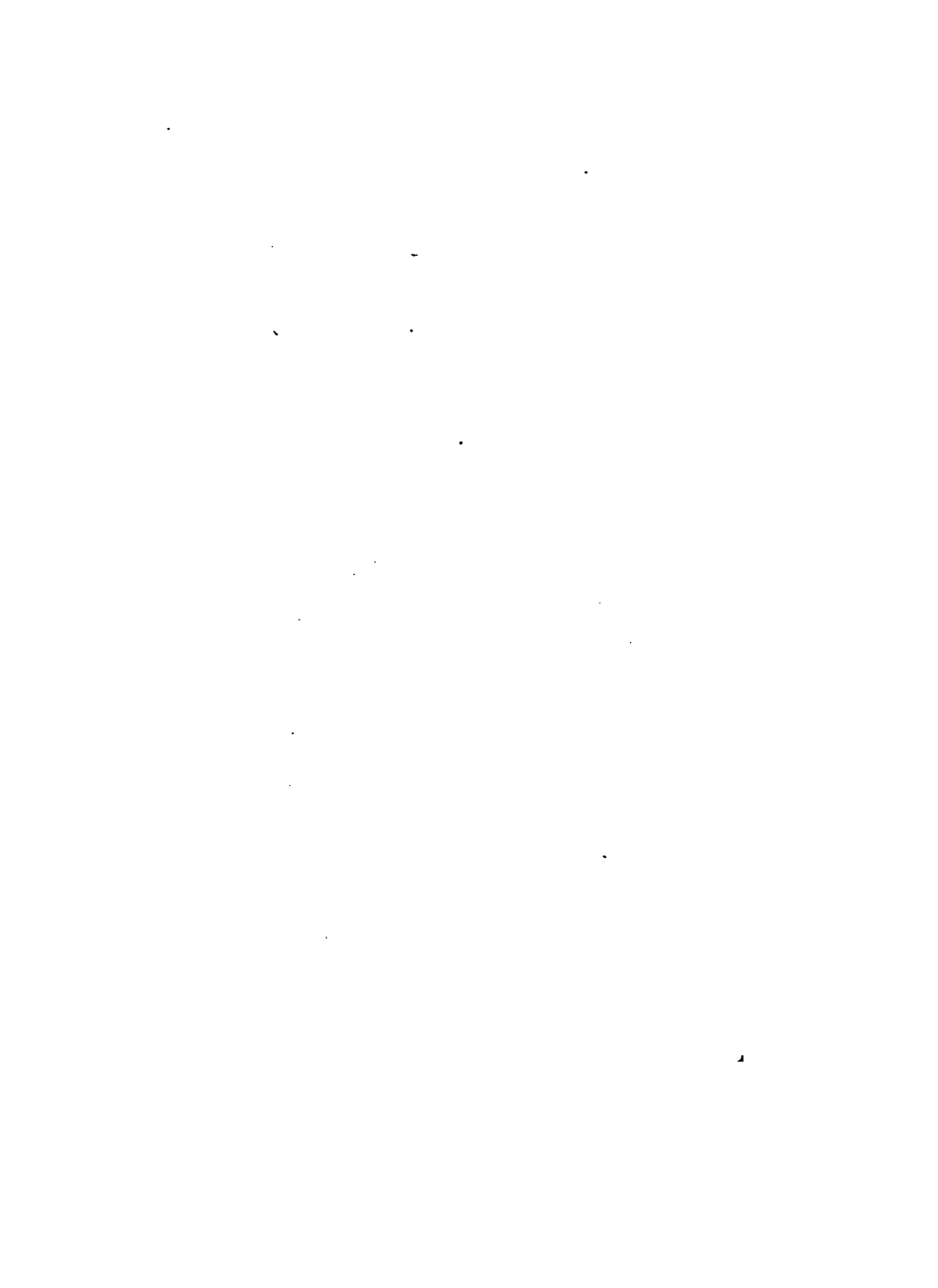
REIGNED FROM A.D. 1413 TO A.D. 1422.

HENRY THE FIFTH succeeds his sire,
And though a youth of wanton fire,
He strives his honour to redeem,¹
And gains the national esteem ;
On Agincourt's ² decisive field
He won the lilies for his shield,
And made the conquer'd French declare,
Him to their Crown undoubted heir ;
Receiv'd their Princess for his bride,
And in the midst of glory died.³

¹ In his father's lifetime he had been remarkable for his idle and disorderly conduct.

² This battle was fought A.D. 1415. The French had one hundred thousand healthy troops, the English about nine thousand, enfeebled by disease ; but the French were defeated, with the loss of ten thousand killed, and fourteen thousand prisoners, while the English loss was below one hundred men.

³ In the thirty-fourth year of his age, and the tenth of his reign.



Henry the Fifth.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1413 TO A.D. 1422.

HENRY THE FIFTH succeeds his sire,
And though a youth of wanton fire,
He strives his honour to redeem,¹
And gains the national esteem ;
On Agincourt's ² decisive field
He won the lilies for his shield,
And made the conquer'd French declare,
Him to their Crown undoubted heir ;
Receiv'd their Princess for his bride,
And in the midst of glory died.³

¹ In his father's lifetime he had been remarkable for his idle and disorderly conduct.

² This battle was fought A.D. 1415. The French had one hundred thousand healthy troops, the English about nine thousand, enfeebled by disease ; but the French were defeated with the loss of ten thousand killed, and fourteen thousand prisoners, while the English loss was below one hundred.

³ In the thirty-fourth year of his age, and in the fifth year of his reign.



Henry the Sixth.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1422 TO A.D. 1461.

HENRY THE SIXTH, of infant years,¹
Ascends the throne, while Bedford² steers
The helm of State; but Joan of Arc³
In France made all his prospects dark.
And as in manhood HENRY rose,
Jack Cade⁴ occasion'd civil woes :
Aspiring York attempts to gain
The throne; but is at Wakefield slain.
His equally ambitious son,
Young Edward, Towton's battle won ;⁵
And mounts the seat of regal power,
Confining HENRY in the Tower.

¹ He ascended the throne when nine months old.

² The Duke of Bedford was appointed Regent.

³ A peasant girl, pretending a divine mission, headed the French army, and defeated the English; but was taken and cruelly put to death as a witch, by Bedford's order.

⁴ A rebel, who raised an insurrection in London; he was afterwards killed in Kent.

⁵ Thirty-six thousand men were killed in this battle.

Edward the Fourth.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1461 TO A.D. 1483.

EDWARD THE FOURTH now wears the crown,
By Warwick¹ rais'd, who pulls him down,
And Henry rules the land again,
Till Warwick's at St. Alban's slain.
EDWARD regains the seat of power,
And sends back Henry to the Tower ;
But Henry's Queen, in arms, now came
To Tewkesbury, to assert her claim ;
Her captur'd son, of tender age,
And Henry, fall by Glo'ster's rage.²
Clarence,³ by EDWARD's order, dies ;
But EDWARD soon death's victim lies.⁴

¹ This Earl of Warwick was called the "*king-maker*."

² Richard Duke of Gloucester, afterwards Richard III., is said to have murdered the young Prince, and also his father Henry.

³ Clarence, Edward's brother, was drowned in a cask of Malmsey wine, his favourite liquor.

⁴ Edward died in the forty-second year of his age.

Edward the Fifth.

REIGNED FROM APRIL 9 TO JUNE 26, 1483.

EDWARD THE FIFTH, a child in years,¹
Upon the English throne appears ;
While haughty Glo'ster² bears command,
And as Protector rules the land ;
But, aiming at the sov'reign power,
He murders Hastings³ in the Tower ;
And makes the hapless wife of Shore⁴
A mendicant from door to door ;
Then in the Tower with dark designs
The King⁵ and Duke of York confines ;
And there with barbarous heart destroys
The unoffending Royal boys.

¹ At thirteen years of age.

² Afterwards Richard the Third.

³ He was beheaded without trial, on a ridiculous charge of witchcraft.

⁴ Jane Shore had been the mistress of Edward the Fourth.

⁵ This unfortunate young King and his brother, were smothered in the Tower of London, by the secret command of Richard.

Richard the Third.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1483 TO A.D. 1485.

THIS cruel tyrant mounts the throne,
By fraud and murder made his own !
False Buckingham,¹ for selfish ends,
At first this wicked King defends ;
Till, slighted, straight to arms he fled,
And soon at Salisbury lost his head.
But Richmond² next appears in arms,
And shakes the tyrant with alarms.
On Bosworth's field, midst rage and strife,
Th' usurper RICHARD lost his life !³
And rival Roses,⁴ party zeal,
No more disturb the kingdom's weal.

¹ Buckingham was betrayed by his own servant, and beheaded without any legal process.

² The Earl of Richmond was descended, by the female line, from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.

³ Thus ended the Royal line of the Plantagenets, which began with Henry the Second, and possessed the English crown three hundred and thirty years.

⁴ The rival houses of York and Lancaster were distinguished by a white and red rose.



Henry the Seventh.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1485 TO A.D. 1509.

RICHMOND ascends, the helm to guide,
And from York's house¹ selects his bride :
Thus HENRY prudently combines
The two contending Royal lines.
A false pretender shortly came,
A baker's boy,² in Warwick's name.
Another rash impostor³ comes,
And he the name of York assumes ;
But soon this rebel was oppos'd,
And Tyburn his ambition clos'd.
HENRY was prudent, wise, and brave,
The gout consign'd him to the grave.⁴

¹ Elizabeth, daughter of Henry the Fourth.

² Lambert Simnel. His forces were subdued at Stoke-upon-Trent ; he was taken, and made a scullion in the King's kitchen.

³ Perkin Warbeck personated the Duke of York, whom Richard had caused to be murdered ; he was hanged at Tyburn. Both impostors came from the Duchess of Burgundy.

⁴ Henry died in the twenty-fourth year of his reign, aged fifty-two.



Henry the Eighth.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1509 TO A.D. 1547.

WHILE haughty Wolsey¹ guides the helm,
The sensual HENRY rules the realm ;
And, tir'd of Cath'rine,² hastes to wed
Fair Boleyn, who soon lost her head.
The power of Rome he then defied,³
And took Jane Seymour for his bride ;
And on her death chose Anne of Cleves,
But, soon divorc'd, this consort leaves.
To Cath'rine Howard he applies,
She on the scaffold shortly dies ;
While Cath'rine Parr succeeding reigns,
Till death the tyrant's rage restrains.

¹ Cardinal Wolsey, afterwards disgraced, died at Leicester Abbey in 1509.

² He divorced Catherine of Arragon, who was his first wife, because she had been the wife of his elder brother.

³ The Reformation commenced, A.D. 1520.

⁴ Henry died A.D. 1547, aged fifty-six, after a reign of thirty-eight years.

Edward the Sixth.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1547 TO A.D. 1553.

EDWARD THE SIXTH, of tender age,
Succeeds¹ his sire of ruthless rage :
While Somerset conducts the state,
And strives to check religious hate ;²
Warwick against his pow'r conspires,
And, much belov'd, the Duke expires.³
Warwick assumes a high command,
And title of Northumberland ;
Then makes the sickly King declare
Jane Grey the kingdom's legal heir ;⁴
And for his son⁵ secures this bride,
While EDWARD, much lamented, died.⁶

¹ In the ninth year of his age.

² He sent Bonner and Gardiner to the Tower.

³ Somerset was executed on Tower-hill, A.D. 1552.

⁴ Mary and Elizabeth, the King's sisters, were declared illegitimate by their father's will.

⁵ His son was the Lord Guilford Dudley, married to Lady Jane Grey.

⁶ Edward died 6th July, 1553, in the sixteenth year of his age, and seventh of his reign.

Queen Mary.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1553 TO A.D. 1558.

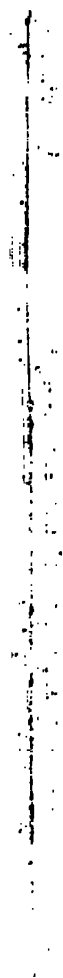
JANE GREY, Northumberland proclaims,
But MARY¹ soon her birth-right gains ;
She marries PHILIP, Prince of Spain,
And marks with blood her cruel reign !
A party ventur'd to rebel,
But Wyatt, their bold leader, fell.
Jane Grey and Dudley next expire,²
While sacred victims³ feed her fire.
Till stung by PHILIP's proud disdain,
Disease and grief conclude her reign.⁴

¹ Mary, the daughter of Henry the Eighth, by Catherine of Arragon.

² Lady Jane Grey and her husband were beheaded on Tower-hill, within one hour of each other.

³ She released the popish bishops, Gardiner and Bonner, from the Tower, while Cranmer and Hooper, Ridley and Latimer, with scores of other victims, were burned in Smithfield and other places.

⁴ Queen Mary died in the forty-third year of her age, and sixth of her reign.



Queen Elizabeth.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1558 TO A.D. 1603.

ELIZABETH,¹ in Mary's room,
Succeeds, and soon dispels the gloom
Of bigot rage ; reforms the State,
While Scotland boils with civil heat ;
Mary, their Queen, to England fled,
Was long confin'd, and lost her head.²
The great Armada sent by Spain,
Was vanquish'd in this glorious reign.
The Queen's regard on Essex shone,
He slights her favour, threatens the throne,
Till on the scaffold³ doom'd to smart,
His hasty sentence broke her heart.⁴

¹ Sister to the late Queen.

² Mary Queen of Scots was confined eighteen years in Fotheringay Castle, and there beheaded, in February, 1587, by order of Elizabeth.

³ Essex had received a ring from the Queen as a pledge of her favour, which he sent her by the Countess of Nottingham, who never delivered it to Elizabeth ; thinking him obstinate, she suffered him to be executed.

⁴ Queen Elizabeth died at the age of seventy, having reigned forty-five years.



James the First.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1603 TO A.D. 1625.

THE Scottish King¹ to England's throne
Succeeding, claims it as his own.
But soon conspiracies appear,
Exciting jealousy and fear ;
And Guy Fawkes, with his powder² train,
In memory will long remain.
Prince Charles in Spain first seeks a wife,
But Henrietta³ takes for life.
Great Raleigh's on the scaffold slain,⁴
Victim of Court intrigues with Spain.
The Commons wound the monarch's pride.
He of a tertian ague died.⁵

¹ James the Sixth of Scotland, son of the unfortunate Mary, united the two Crowns, as James the First of England.

² This was a conspiracy to blow up the Houses of Parliament while the King was present.

³ A French princess.

⁴ Lords Grey and Cobham and Sir Walter Raleigh had been accused of conspiracy ; the two former were pardoned, but Raleigh, after long imprisonment, was executed to please the King of Spain.

⁵ In the twenty-second year of his reign.

Charles the First.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1625 TO A.D. 1649.

CHARLES THE FIRST, in evil hour,
Assumes the reins of sov'reign power ;
Strains ev'ry nerve supplies to gain,
And luckless fights with France and Spain.
While Buckingham,¹ his fav'rite, dies ;
Illegally ² he gets supplies !
Dismiss'd his Parliament with pride,
And on Star-Chamber³ power relied.
The King and Commons now contend,
And Strafford⁴ falls, the monarch's friend.
His army vanquish'd,⁵ fav'rites dead,
King CHARLES was tried, and lost his head !⁶

¹ Assassinated at Portsmouth by one Felton.

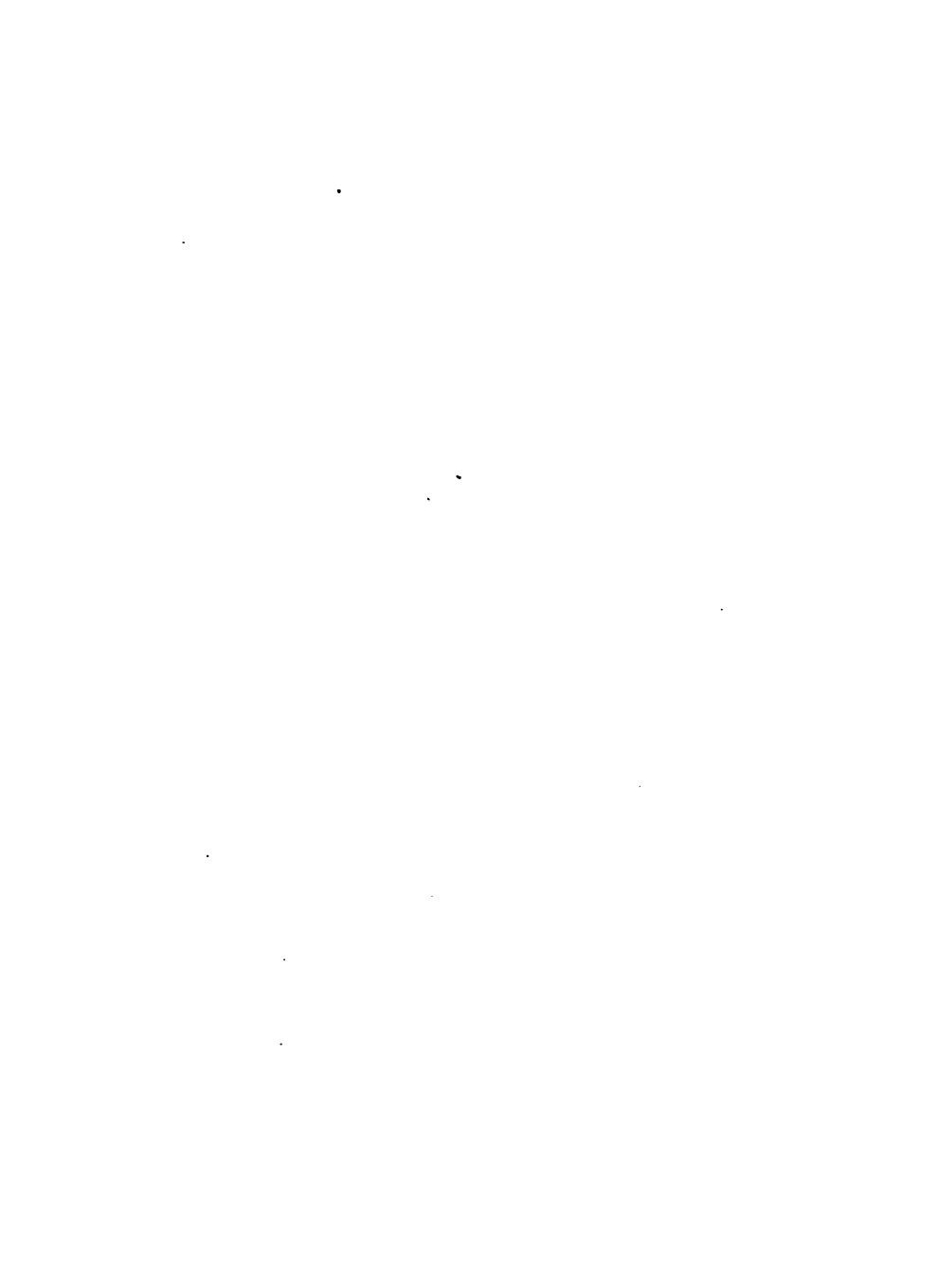
² Without the consent of the Parliament.

³ A court independent of any law.

⁴ The Earl of Strafford was impeached by the Commons of high treason, and beheaded, A.D. 1641.

⁵ By the Parliamentary forces at the Battle of Naseby.

⁶ The King was beheaded at Whitehall, 30th January, 1649, aged forty-nine years ; reigned twenty-four.



Cromwell,
AND THE COMMONWEALTH

FROM A.D. 1649 TO A.D. 1660.

CROMWELL,¹ who gain'd the chief command,
Was call'd Protector of the land !
In Ireland crush'd the royal cause ;
To Scotland next his army draws.
He there puts CHARLES's arms to rout,
And then to England turns about ;
And at fam'd Wor'ster's fatal fight
Defeats and puts the King to flight.²
To power despotic now he rose,
But humbled England's foreign foes !
Dissolv'd the Parliament with pride ;
At length this bold usurper died.³
RICHARD, his son, succeeds, but flies
From power, and in seclusion dies.⁴

¹ Oliver Cromwell, son of a gentleman in Huntingdonshire.

² Charles the Second escaped to France.

³ A.D. 1658, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, and the ninth of his usurpation.

⁴ Richard died at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, A.D. 1712.

Charles the Second.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1660 TO A.D. 1685.

BY Monk¹ restor'd, King CHARLES regains
Accession to the throne, and reigns
Belov'd by some, though censur'd much ;
He married Kate,² and fought the Dutch !
Then peace concluded with his foes :
And Clarendon³ in exile goes.
A proud Cabal assumes command,
And dark designs⁴ disturb the land ;
While England wept and Freedom sigh'd,
Russell and Sydney nobly died !
The King himself, with care worn down,
Expires,⁵ and leaves to York the Crown.

¹ General Monk, afterwards created Duke of Albemarle.

² Catherine, a Princess of Portugal.

³ Lord Chancellor.

⁴ A pretended plot of Titus Oates ; another, called the *Meal-tub Plot* ; and a real one called the *Rye-house Plot*, for which Lord W. Russell and Algernon Sydney were beheaded.

⁵ Aged fifty-five, in the twenty-fifth of his reign.

James the Second.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1685 TO A.D. 1689.

NOW JAMES¹ THE SECOND mounts the throne,
And soon his Popish zeal makes known.
Young Monmouth² arms, on Sedgemoor's field,
But to the scaffold 's doom'd to yield ;
While Kirke and Jeffreys,³ England's shame,
Disgrace the soldier's, judge's name.
Flush'd with success, the King proceeds
To introduce his Popish creeds ;⁴
While monks and jesuits round him throng,
He finds, too late, he 's acted wrong ;
Is forc'd to abdicate and fly,⁵
In France an exil'd King to die.

¹ Duke of York, brother to the late King.

² Monmouth was an illegitimate son of Charles II.

³ A barbarous commander, and a sanguinary judge.

⁴ He endeavoured by the vilest treachery and breach of faith, to re-establish the Roman Catholic religion.

⁵ He abdicated the throne and fled to France, A.D. 1689, having reigned four years. He died in 1701, aged sixty-eight.



William and Mary.

REIGNED TOGETHER FROM A.D. 1689 TO A.D. 1694.

WILLIAM ALONE, A.D. 1694 TO A.D. 1702.

WILLIAM THE THIRD, of Nassau's House,
With Royal MARY¹ as his spouse,
As King and Queen their sceptres join,
Whilst James is routed at the Boyne.²
At Killycrankie's³ famous fight,
The vanquish'd Scots are put to flight;
And WILLIAM reigns with great applause,
Confirming England's rights and laws!
His Queen expires; he reigns alone,
And adds new splendour to the throne;
Defeats the French⁴ upon the main,
And, crown'd with glory, clos'd his reign.⁵

¹ William Prince of Orange, and Mary, daughter of James the Second, the late King.

² The battle of the Boyne, in Ireland, A.D. 1690.

³ The battle of Killycrankie, A.D. 1691.

⁴ At the battle of La Hogue, A.D. 1692.

⁵ The King died of a fall from his horse, A.D. 1702, in the fifty-second year of his age, having reigned thirteen years.

Queen Anne.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1702 TO A.D. 1714.

THE British Crown to ANNE¹ descends,
And well its honour she defends.
To GEORGE of Denmark soon we find,
This Queen in happy marriage join'd.
Marlborough the brave receives command,
And beats the French² upon the land ;
While Rooke and Shovel nobly gain
Complete dominion o'er the main.
This Queen gave Spanish pride a shock,
Her forces took Gibraltar's rock :
But factions plagu'd her latter end ;
While Whigs and Tories³ fierce contend,
She dies⁴ amidst the party flames
Of Brunswick's right and Stuart's claims.

¹ The Princess Anne, a sister of the late Queen Mary.

² At the battles of Ramilies, Blenheim, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet.

³ The disputes of the Whigs and Tories are said to have embittered and shortened the Queen's days.

⁴ In the fiftieth year of her age and thirteenth of her reign. She was the last sovereign of the House of Stuart.

George the First.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1714 TO A.D. 1727.

TO GEORGE THE FIRST,¹ of Brunswick's race,
The factious Tories now give place.
He mounts the throne by legal right,
Resolv'd against his foes to fight;
While party feuds and furious zeal,
For diff'rent interests still prevail.
He lays the fiend Rebellion low,
And triumphs over ev'ry foe.
Mars the Pretender's² rash designs,
And rebel Lords³ to death consigns;
And making peace with France and Spain,
At Osnaburgh concludes his reign.⁴

¹ George, the Elector of Hanover, succeeded as the next Protestant heir, by the "Act of Settlement."

² The son of James the Second.

³ The Earls of Derwentwater and Kenmuir, and a number of other gentlemen, were beheaded; and above one thousand persons were transported to North America.

⁴ The King was taken ill on a visit to his German States, and died A.D. 1727, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and thirteenth of his reign.

George the Second.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1727 TO A.D. 1760.

NOW GEORGE THE SECOND¹ rules the land,
And war displays its fiery brand !
While Walpole's² councils ably guide,
He hurls defeat on Spanish pride ;
The King compels the French to yield,
At Dettingen's³ immortal field.
The young Pretender spreads alarms
In Scotland, with victorious arms ;
But soon Culloden's⁴ dreadful fight
Constrains the youth to take his flight.
Great Pitt⁵ directs the helm, admir'd,
Till GEORGE, esteem'd by all, expir'd.⁶

¹ Son of the late King.

² Afterwards Earl of Orford.

³ In 1742-3, fought by the King in person.

⁴ This battle was fought and won by the King's son, the Duke of Cumberland.

⁵ Afterwards Earl of Chatham.

⁶ The King died at Kensington, A.D. 1760, aged seventy-seven, in the thirty-fourth year of his reign.

George the Third.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1760 TO A.D. 1820.

YOUNG GEORGE THE THIRD,¹ a Briton born,
The royal honours now adorn.
Chatham retires, and Bute succeeds,
And Wilkes in factious mood proceeds.
George Gordon's mobs spread dire alarms,
America revolts in arms !
And France and Spain afford her aid,
Till she is free, and peace is made.
Belov'd at home, this Sov'reign's reign
Secures the empire of the main ;
And though she mourn'd for statesmen² dead,
And warriors³ who so nobly bled,
Britannia still her hope maintain'd,
Her valiant sons the throne sustain'd.

¹ Son of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and grandson of George the Second.

² Fox and Pitt.

³ Nelson and Abercrombie.

GEORGE THE THIRD.

Courageous Wellington arose,⁴
And crush'd Napoleon and our foes :
From Waterloo⁵ th' usurper fled,
And Peace again exalts her head !
Now, follow'd by a nation's tears,
The Princess Charlotte⁶ disappears ;
A mother's hope, a husband's pride,
Old England's youthful heiress died.
At length King GEORGE's health⁷ decays,
The Prince of Wales the sceptre sways ;⁸
Till spent with age, and claim'd by death,
At Windsor he resigns his breath.⁹

⁴ Sir Arthur Wellesley, created Duke of Wellington for his victories in the Peninsula.

⁵ This memorable battle was commenced on the 16th, and ended on the 18th June, 1815.

⁶ Daughter and only child of George Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV., and heiress to the throne.

⁷ The King's intellectual faculties were entirely suspended many years before his death.

⁸ The Prince of Wales had been appointed Regent of the kingdom during his father's indisposition.

⁹ January 20th, 1820, in the eighty-second year of his age, and *sixtieth* of his reign.

George the Fourth.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1820 TO A.D. 1830.

THE REGENT¹ now ascends the throne,
With regal pomp before unknown !
His Royal Consort's² doom'd to feel
The weight of his malignant zeal.
Before her peers, for crimes arraign'd,
By none but base traducers nam'd ;
She through the ordeal nobly goes,
And triumphs over all her foes !
This reign at home was much distress'd,
Commercial tumults³ scarce suppress'd,
When Indian broils and Turkish spite
Call forth our sons again to fight ;

¹ George Prince of Wales, son of the late King.

² He had married, in 1795, his cousin the Princess Caroline Elizabeth, of Brunswick. In 1820 she was charged with having committed acts of impropriety with an Italian servant, while in Italy ; and at her trial in the House of Lords, false evidence of the vilest description was brought against her ; but it was entirely disproved, and the charge was abandoned.

³ The year 1825 was a period of great commercial distress.

GEORGE THE FOURTH.

But Campbell and Codrington maintain
Our sway o'er India, and the main.⁴
The State improv'd, and factions heal'd,
The odious Test Acts⁵ were repeal'd ;
And GEORGE, at length, with hesitation,
Gave Romanists emancipation.⁶
Now GEORGE his course of life had run,
Disease and weakness weigh'd him down :
In ancient Windsor's stately halls
The monarch soon death's victim falls.⁷

⁴ General Campbell invaded the Burmese empire, in the East Indies, and compelled it to surrender, 1826 ; and Admiral Codrington defeated the Turks at Navarino, 1827.

⁵ These Acts deprived dissenters of many political privileges.

⁶ The Catholic Relief Bill passed, 13th April, 1829.

⁷ June 26th, 1830, aged sixty-eight, in the eleventh year of his reign.

William the Fourth.

REIGNED FROM A.D. 1830 TO A.D. 1837.

WILLIAM,¹ the sailor's boast and pride,
Succeeds, with ADELAIDE his bride ;
And with a patriot's heart and hand,
Reforms the Senate² of the land !
At home he grants his people's claims,
And well his dignity maintains ;
Freedom reveres, and with his pen
Emancipates his fellow men !³
This reign entire with peace was bless'd,
The nation's sword was gone to rest ;
And King and Queen, with grace arrayed,
Just seven years the sceptre sway'd.
Admir'd abroad, belov'd at home,
WILLIAM descended to the tomb.⁴

¹ William Henry, Duke of Clarence, 3rd son of George III.

² The Reform Bill received Royal assent, 7th June, 1832.

³ The abolition of negro slavery in all the British dominions was secured by Act of Parliament, 1st August, 1834.

⁴ On the 20th June, 1837, and was buried at Windsor.



Queen Victoria.

Ascended the Throne June 20th, 1837.

PRINCESS VICTORIA,¹ now a Queen !
Ascends the throne with graceful mien.
Three years alone the sceptre wields,
And then her hand in marriage yields,
To ALBERT,² a Prince of Cobourg's line,
In whom illustrious virtues shine :
And mutual love, with talents rare,
Combine to bless this royal pair !
Melbourne First Minister appears,
And leads the councils of the Peers ;
While Russell takes the chief command
Amid the Commons of the land.
Now Peel's appointed to the helm,
And guides the councils of the realm :

¹ Daughter and only child of Edward Duke of Kent, fourth son of George III., and brother to the two last kings.

² Son of the then reigning Duke of Saxe Cobourg Gotha, and cousin to her Majesty Queen Victoria. Her Majesty and the Prince were married 10th of February, 1840.

QUEEN VICTORIA.

To Trade and Commerce aid extends,
His country's interests well defends.
Russell to high command returns,
O'Connell dies,³ old Erin mourns ;
Rebellion's blood-red banner waves,
Her sons are doom'd t' ignoble graves !⁴
The potent arm of law maintains
Its power !— and Ireland peace regains.
While Revolutions⁵ shake the world,
Old England's peaceful flag unfurl'd,
Braves all the storms of adverse fate,
Great Britain still preserves her State !

³ The celebrated Daniel O'Connell died at Genoa, on his way to Rome, A.D. 1847.

⁴ A Rebellion broke out in Ireland in 1848 ; the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and several persons were convicted and transported for sedition. Five persons were convicted and condemned to death for high treason.

⁵ The Revolutions in France, Austria, Prussia, Italy, and other parts of the world, A.D. 1848 and 1849.

QUEEN VICTORIA.

O'er India's climes our arms succeed,
In conquest only Britons bleed !
Our lovely Queen, with offspring bless'd,
Gives joy to ev'ry loyal breast ;
And Brunswick's line on England's throne
'Secur'd to ages yet unknown.
Still o'er Old Albion's isle she reigns,
Example to all future queens :
Long may she reign, till call'd above,
Unrivall'd in her people's love.





APPENDIX,
COMPRISING
A SKETCH OF THE CHARACTER OF EACH MONARCH,
AND A SUMMARY OF
THE LEADING EVENTS IN EACH REIGN.

CHARACTER OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

WILLIAM was a prince of great courage, capacity, and ambition ; he was stern, obdurate, and revengeful ; but of a vigorous and commanding spirit. He was fond of glory, and though not insensible to generosity, he was hardened against compassion ; and he appeared ostentatious, and ambitious of show and parade, equally in his clemency and in his severity. His aspect was noble, his stature tall and portly, and his strength so great, that few men of that age could bend his bow or handle his arms. Though very far from being one of the best, he was probably one of the greatest of the English monarchs.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

WILLIAM was the natural son of Robert, Duke of Normandy, by Arlotta, the daughter of a furrier in Falaise, and was very early established in that grandeur, from which his birth seemed to have set him at so great a distance. He was only ten years of age, when, upon the death of his father, in a pilgrimage to the Holy

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

Land, in 1035, he succeeded to the duchy ; having received the allegiance of the States, and been acknowledged successor to Robert, prior to that prince's departure. Some years afterwards he paid a visit to Edward the Confessor, who treated him with great respect, and made a tour with him through England.

Edward the Confessor dying without issue, was said to have appointed him his heir ; and William soon after landed at Pevensey, in Sussex, with a powerful army, and proceeded to Hastings. Harold, the reigning prince, marched to oppose him, and a severe battle ensued on the 14th of October, 1066, in which William obtained a complete victory, though he had three horses killed under him, and lost a great number of his troops. Harold was killed, with many of the nobility, and nearly 30,000 soldiers.

William pretended that he came to revenge the death of Prince Alfred, brother to King Edward ; to restore Robert, Archbishop of Canterbury, to his see ; and to obtain the crown as his right, it having been bequeathed to him by Edward the Confessor.

The latter part of William's life was disturbed by a rebellion of his son Robert, who having been promised the dukedom of Normandy, demanded the fulfilment of this promise in his father's lifetime. William gave him a flat denial, observing that " it was not his custom to throw off his clothes till he went to bed." An open quarrel was the consequence ; and after a contest of several years, Robert was besieged by his father in the castle of Gerberoy, in France. The garrison was strong ; and many skirmishes took place. In one of these, the King and his son met, and, without knowing each other, engaged with fury. Robert wounded his

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

father in the arm, and unhorsed him : the next blow would probably have been fatal, had not the King made himself known by calling for help. Robert, shocked at the dreadful crime he was on the point of committing, threw himself at his father's feet, and implored forgiveness. William sternly withdrew ; but afterwards, moved by his son's conduct, restored him to favour.

William's death happened while on an expedition against the King of France, who had offended him by invading Normandy, and privately supporting some of the rebellious nobility. It was occasioned by a bruise in the abdomen, against the pommel of his horse's saddle. He died in a village near Rouen, on the 9th of September, 1087, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, after reigning fifty-two years in Normandy, and twenty-one in England.

He was interred at Caen ; and a remarkable circumstance occurred at his funeral. As the body was being carried to the grave, a man who stood by, in a loud voice forbade its interment in a spot which the deceased had unjustly seized. "That very spot," he cried, "is the site of my father's house ; and I summon the departed soul before the divine tribunal, to answer for the crime." All present were struck by this solemn appeal ; and the man's charge being found to be just, he immediately received satisfaction for the wrong.

LONDON'S FIRST CHARTER.—It is a remarkable fact, that the conditions on which the citizens of London consented to William's assumption of the crown of England, formed the subject of a written charter, the first they ever possessed. It consists of only four lines, on a bit of parchment six inches long and one broad. The following is a literal translation of this interesting

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

document, which is preserved with great care among the civic archives in Guildhall.

"William the king, friendly salutes William the bishop, and Godfrey the portreve,* and all the burgesses within London, both French and English. And I declare that I grant you to be all law-worthy, as you were in the days of King Edward. And I will that every child shall be his father's heir, after his father's days; and I will not suffer any person to do you wrong. God keep you."

DOMESDAY-BOOK.—In 1081, King William caused to be made a general survey of all the lands in his kingdom, their extent in each district, their proprietors, tenures and value; and in some counties, the number of tenants, cottagers, and slaves, of all denominations, who lived upon them. He appointed commissioners for this purpose, who entered every particular in their register, by the verdict of juries; and after a labour of six years, brought him an exact account of all the landed property in his kingdom. This great work, called "Domesday-Book," the most valuable piece of antiquity possessed by any nation, is still preserved in the British Museum; and serves to illustrate to us in many particulars, the ancient state of England. It is a remarkable circumstance, however, that this survey does not include London. As the original manuscript does not appear to have been mutilated, it must be concluded that the property of the citizens of London was registered in a separate volume, now lost; or that it was not divided into knights' fees, and consequently not surveyed with the rest of the kingdom.

* A chief magistrate, the governor of a port or harbour.

II.

CHARACTER OF WILLIAM RUFUS.

THE memory of this monarch is handed down to us with little advantage, by the clergy, whom he had grievously offended ; and his conduct affords little reason for doubting the character which they have assigned him. He appears to have been a violent and tyrannical prince, a perfidious and dangerous neighbour, an unkind and ungenerous relation. He was prodigal and rapacious in the management of his treasury ; and if he possessed abilities he lay so much under the government of impetuous passions, that he made little use of them in his administration. He, however, possessed great courage, and a vigorous understanding ; two qualities which, with prudence and foresight, he might have turned to considerable advantage for his people.

At the time of his death, he had the Archbishopric of Canterbury, two bishoprics, and twelve abbeys in his hands ; and during his reign he disposed of the bishoprics and monasteries to those who bid most for them.

Shortly after his accession to the throne, William and his brother Robert made war upon Henry, their youngest brother, whom they besieged in Mount St. Michael's, in Normandy. The King, riding out one morning unattended, fell in with a party of Henry's soldiers, and endeavoured to force his way through them ; but he was dismounted, and a soldier was going to despatch him, when he saved his life by exclaiming, "*Hold, knave ! I am the King of England.*" Upon this, the man dropped

WILLIAM RUFUS.

his sword, raised the monarch from the ground, and immediately received from him the honour of knight-hood.

Risdon, in his "Description of Devon," says that, "This King, falling sick at Gloucester, and very dangerously taken, began seriously to repent him of his dissolute life, especially of simony, and oppression of the church and churchmen. In which good temper he conferred the archbishopric of Canterbury upon Anselme, which he had kept void in his own hands four years, and Lincoln upon Robert Bluett, his chancellor, but upon his recovery he much repented him of that repentance, and wishing the same in his hands again, fell to his old practices as busily as ever before."

William's death was occasioned by an accident, whilst hunting in the New Forest, in Hampshire. He was wounded by an arrow, shot by Walter Tyrell, his particular friend and favourite, and immediately expired, on the 2nd of August, 1100, aged forty-four, after a reign of thirteen years. It is said, so little respect was paid to his body, that it was conveyed in a coal-cart to Winchester, and was soon after interred, in a very private manner, in the church of St. Swithin.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

THE most remarkable historical event that occurred during the reign of this monarch was the Crusade.

The Crusades, or Wars of the Cross, were great military expeditions undertaken by the princes of Europe, for the purpose of rescuing the land of Judæa (or Palestine), and the holy city of Jerusalem from the hands of the Saracens and other infidels. Men of all ranks and

HENRY THE FIRST.

all nations flew to arms with the utmost ardour ; and, led on by the wily persuasion of Pope Martin II, and the fanaticism of one Peter the Hermit, a native of France, they left homes, families, and country, and enrolled themselves in this (so-called) sacred warfare. Duke Robert, William's elder brother, having engaged himself and his Norman subjects in the cause, and being too poor to equip himself and his retinue in the style and magnificence of other princes, resolved to mortgage, or rather to sell, his duchy to William, for the trifling sum of ten thousand marks. The bargain was soon concluded ; the king raised the money by violent extortions on his subjects of all ranks ; even the convents were obliged to melt their plate in order to furnish the quota demanded of them. William was thus put in possession of Normandy and Maine, and Robert, providing himself with a magnificent train, set out for the Holy Land in pursuit of glory ; and, by his infatuated folly, lost, not only his duchy of Normandy, but the kingdom of England.

III.

CHARACTER OF HENRY THE FIRST.

HENRY was one of the most accomplished princes of the age in which he lived, and possessed all the great qualities of body and mind, both natural and acquired, which could fit him for the high station to which he attained. His person was manly, his countenance engaging, his eyes clear, serene, and penetrating. He

21

HENRY THE FIRST.

was facetious and affable with his favourites, but discreet and cautious with his courtiers. By his great progress in literature he acquired the name of "Beauclerc," or, the scholar ; but his application to sedentary pursuits abated nothing of the activity and vigour of his government. He was possessed of great courage and fortitude, and his temper was susceptible of friendship ; but, in his resentments he was cruel, vindictive, and implacable. His Norman descent inspired him with a dislike to the English, whom he oppressed by extravagant exactions, to enable him to maintain expensive wars upon the continent. He is said to have died the richest prince in Europe.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

HENRY not only usurped the possession of the Crown of England from his elder brother Robert, but, upon perceiving the indolence and incapacity of that prince to govern, he attacked him in his duchy, obtained possession of Normandy, and brought Robert a prisoner to England. That unfortunate prince was afterwards confined for life in Cardiff-castle, Glamorganshire. He lingered twenty-eight years in this wretched condition, and some historians assert that Henry had the barbarity to order him to be deprived of sight, by the application of red-hot copper wire to his eyes.

The University of Cambridge may be said to have been established in this reign ; for though it was founded two centuries before, it suffered much from the depredations of the Danes, and seems to have been entirely deserted. An ancient historian compares its commencement to "a little fountain which hath swelled into a river, by which all England is rendered fruitful."

HENRY THE FIRST.

This important establishment attracted little notice at the time, though contemporary writers dwell with much satisfaction upon what they call the piety of the king, in erecting some monastic establishments.

Though this king was obliged partly to yield to the encroachments of the clergy, he enforced the strict administration of justice on the laity; and in numerous instances treated with severity all thieves, idle and marauding followers of the Court, and those who adulterated or debased the coin. The latter practice had been carried so far as to become a national grievance. The debased money was called in, but the difficulty of replacing it with a better circulating medium, caused a scarcity, from which the kingdom suffered severely. The ministers of justice were terrified by the severe conduct of the king, which was often covered by dissimulation; so that Bluett, Bishop of Lincoln, and Chief Justice, when told that the king had praised him, expressed his fears that his ruin was intended.

LONDON'S SECOND CHARTER.—Henry, on his accession to the throne, granted a charter to London, which seems to have been the first step towards rendering that city a corporation. By this charter the city was empowered to keep the farm of Middlesex at 300*l.* a year; to elect its own sheriff and justiciary, and to hold pleas of the crown; and it was exempted from scot, Danegelt, trials by combat, and lodging the king's retinue. These, with a confirmation of the privileges of their court of hustings, wardmotes and common-halls, and their liberty of hunting in Middlesex and Surrey, are the chief articles of this charter.

DEATH OF PRINCE WILLIAM.—Henry's only son, William, having reached his eighteenth year, and having been

HENRY THE FIRST.

recognised as successor to the kingdom, his father carried him over to Normandy, that he might receive the homage of the barons of that duchy. The king, on his return, set sail from Harfleur, and was soon carried by a fair wind out of sight of land. The prince was detained by some accident ; and his sailors, as well as their captain, Thomas Fitz-Stephens, having spent the interval in drinking, in their hurry to follow the king, heedlessly suffered the ship to strike on a rock, in consequence of which she immediately foundered. Prince William was put into the long-boat and had got clear of the ship, when, hearing the cries of his natural sister, Mary, Countess of Perche, he ordered the seamen to row back, in hopes of saving her ; but the numbers who then crowded in, soon sunk the boat, and the prince, with all his retinue, perished. Above a hundred and forty young noblemen of the principal families of England and Normandy were lost on this occasion. A butcher of Rouen was the only person on board who escaped ; he clung to the mast, and was taken up next morning by some fishermen. Fitz-Stephens, the captain, also clung to the mast, but being informed by the butcher that Prince William had perished, he said he would not survive the disaster, and threw himself headlong into the sea. King Henry entertained hopes for three days that his son had put into some distant port in England ; but when certain intelligence of the calamity was brought to him, he fainted away, and it was remarked that he never after was seen to smile, and never recovered his wonted cheerfulness.

“ Woe was in England’s halls that day,
Woe in her royal towers,
While low her haughty monarch lay,
To wail his smitten flowers :

HENRY THE FIRST.

And though protracted years bestow
Bright honour's envied store,
Yet on that crown'd and lofty brow
The smile sat nevermore ! "

Sigourney.

HENRY'S DEATH.—Henry had resided in Normandy for a considerable time previous to his death ; but was preparing for a journey to England, when he was seized with a sudden illness at St. Denis le Forment, from eating too plentifully of lampreys, a food which agreed better with his palate than his constitution. He died on the 1st of December, 1135, leaving, by his will, his daughter Maude, or Matilda, heiress of all his dominions ; but a rival appeared in the person of Stephen, son of the Count de Blois, who had married Adela, daughter of William the Conqueror. On Henry's death, Stephen hastened to England, and, through the influence of a party who favoured his pretensions, was proclaimed king, at London. The cause of Matilda, however, was espoused by a large portion of the nobility ; and a desolating civil war was the consequence, attended with great changes of fortune to both parties.

In the year 1100, Henry restored to the English people the liberty of using fire and candle by night, of which they had been deprived by William the Conqueror.

STEPHEN.

IV.

CHARACTER OF STEPHEN.

STEPHEN was a prince of considerable courage, fortitude, and activity. He would have been greatly beloved by his people, had he not been harassed by the efforts of a powerful competitor. This obliged him to take such measures for his safety as were inconsistent with the dictates of honour. His necessities compelled him to infringe the charter of privileges which he granted at his accession. His vices, as a king, appear to have been the effect of the troubles in which he was involved ; for as a man, he was brave, open, liberal, and just ; and during the short calm that succeeded the tempest of his reign, he published an edict, to restrain all rapine and violence, and disbanded the foreign mercenaries who had preyed so long upon his people.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

THE CIVIL WARS.—Stephen endeavoured to strengthen himself and his pretensions against Maude, by taking a foreign army into his pay, and by signing a charter, in which he acknowledged his being elected king by the clergy and people. He also confirmed the rights of the Church, abolished the forest laws, and revived the favourite laws of Edward the Confessor ; but being unable to reward the nobles according to their expectations, a rebellion was soon raised against him, and he was obliged to conclude a disadvantageous peace with the inhabitants of Wales and Scotland. He then fell into a

STEPHEN.

lethargy, and the Normans, imagining that he was dead, invited Theobald, his brother, to seize the duchy : however, Stephen recovering, went into Normandy, expelled his brother, and then returned to England, where the friends of Matilda were ready to declare in her favour, assisted by the King of Scotland ; but Stephen invaded Scotland, compelled King David to conclude another peace with him, and reduced the refractory English barons to submission.

He now reigned with great tranquillity for some time : but being jealous of the power of the clergy, he seized the castles belonging to the Bishops of Salisbury, Lincoln, and Ely ; upon which the Bishop of Winchester, legate of England, and the king's own brother, became his most inveterate enemy. The clergy, also, who possessed not only castles, but garrisons, made their ambition the cause of the people ; and the Empress Maude took this opportunity of personally asserting her right to the throne.

England was now distracted by all the rage of civil war, while the people were plundered by both parties. The king faced the storm with noble fortitude, he besieged the empress in Wallingford, pursued her to Lincoln, and gave battle to the Earl of Gloucester before that city, when, after a great effusion of blood, the earl was victorious ; and the king, having broken his battle-axe and sword in pieces by the force of his blows, was struck down on his knees with a stone before he could be taken ; after which he was confined in Bristol Castle, and ignominiously loaded with irons.

While Stephen was in prison, the Duke of Anjou seized upon Normandy ; and the sovereignty of Maude was everywhere acknowledged ; but, on her behaving

HENRY THE SECOND.

with great haughtiness, and refusing to mitigate the severity of the Norman laws, a revolt ensued, and she was obliged to quit London; and Stephen being set at liberty, was everywhere successful, till the empress and her son Henry were obliged to retire to Normandy.

The young prince soon after landed an army in England, in order to obtain the crown; but in 1153, Stephen concluded a peace with him; and upon condition of enjoying the crown during his life, consented that Henry should succeed to it at his death. Stephen died on the 25th of October, 1154, in the fiftieth year of his age.

V.

CHARACTER OF HENRY THE SECOND.

HENRY was a prince of middle stature, strong and well proportioned; his countenance was lively and engaging; his conversation affable and entertaining; his language easy, persuasive, and ever at command. His character, in private as well as in public life, is almost without a blemish; and he seems to have possessed every accomplishment, both of body and mind, which makes a man either estimable or amiable. He was compassionate to all in distress, and so charitable, that he constantly allotted one-tenth of his household provisions to the poor; and was a generous benefactor to learned men. He loved peace, but possessed both courage and conduct in war; was provident without timidity; strict in the execution of justice, without severity; and tem-

HENRY THE SECOND.

perate without austerity. He was beloved and revered above all the princes of his time, and his death was deeply lamented by his subjects, whose happiness seems to have been his chief desire. He enacted wholesome and wise laws ; and the English nation to this day enjoys benefits of which he laid the foundation.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

HENRY the Second, the first of the royal line of the Plantagenets, commenced his reign by several very popular acts of government. He dismissed the foreign troops with whom England was overrun ; ordered a number of the castles, which enabled the great barons to maintain a power independent of the crown, to be demolished ; and granted charters to several of the towns, by which they held their privileges directly from himself, and independently of any other superior. These charters laid the foundation of English liberty ; as the citizens of the towns were now, for the first time, considered as one of the political orders of the State.

DEATH OF BECKET.—The king had for some years met with continual disturbance, from the arrogance of Thomas à Becket, whom he had raised from a very humble station to the see of Canterbury. His haughty conduct at length became so intolerable that Henry was heard to say with bitterness, that he had no friends left, otherwise he would be freed from the tyranny of that ungrateful prelate. These words were construed by four of the king's attendants into a desire for Becket's death. They immediately proceeded to Canterbury, on the 30th December, 1172 ; and entering the church where he was engaged in the evening service, they mur-

HENRY THE SECOND.

dered him before the altar. The king was overwhelmed with grief and terror on account of this murder, which there is no reason for believing he had in any degree countenanced. What is most extraordinary, the pope's legate prevailed on Henry to do penance, by going bare-foot to Becket's tomb, and to be scourged by the Augustine monks, who gave him eighty lashes on his naked back. Becket's murderers were allowed to go unmolested ; but he acquired the reputation of a saint, and some pretended miracles were ascribed to his shrine.

CONQUEST OF IRELAND.—The reign of this monarch is remarkable for the conquest of Ireland. That island, though early converted to Christianity, and though it had made some advancement in civilization, had, at this period, fallen into great barbarism. It was under the dominion of several independent chieftains, or kings, who were in a state of constant warfare with each other. One of these, having been driven from his possessions, applied for assistance to Henry, who soon found a pretext for invading the island, and annexing it to the English crown. In 1172 he sailed with a numerous fleet to Ireland, and landed at Waterford. He met with but little opposition from the inhabitants, who, worn out with intestine commotions, submitted to him in the prospect of future tranquillity. Since that time, Ireland remained an appendage to the English crown, till its union with Great Britain.

THE REVOLT OF THE PRINCES.—The latter part of Henry's reign was embittered by family dissensions. By his Queen, Eleanor, he had four sons, Henry, Richard, Geoffrey, and John. Henry had been anointed king during his father's life, and appointed his successor : *ut he also demanded a share in the government, which*

HENRY THE SECOND.

being refused, he prevailed on his two younger brothers to join him in rebellion against their father. They obtained the support of the Kings of France and Scotland ; Henry's Norman dominions were invaded by the King of France, accompanied by the rebellious princes ; and the King of Scotland invaded England.

Henry, however, overthrew the forces of his enemies both abroad and at home. He defeated the King of Scotland ; took him prisoner, and, before his release, compelled him to do homage for the Scottish crown. For a few years he enjoyed tranquillity ; but he was again involved in differences with his children, in the course of which two of them, Henry and Geoffrey, died. Richard, supported by the King of France, again invaded his father's continental dominions, and compelled him to accept a peace on terms which he chose to dictate, none of which affected him so deeply as the discovery that his youngest and favourite son, John, had been privately in the interest of his enemies. The unhappy king, already overloaded with cares and sorrows, upon the discovery of this last act of filial ingratitude and desertion, broke out into expressions of the utmost despair, cursed the day in which he received his miserable being, and bestowed on his ungrateful and undutiful children a malediction which he never could be prevailed upon to retract. The more his heart was disposed to friendship and affection, the more he resented the barbarous return which his four sons had successively made to his paternal care ; and this finishing blow, by depriving him of every comfort in life, quite broke his spirit, and threw him into a lingering fever, of which he expired at the castle of Chinon, near Saumer, on the 6th July, 1189.

VI.

CHARACTER OF RICHARD THE FIRST.

RICHARD was tall, graceful, fair, and well proportioned. His eyes were blue and sparkling, his hair of a bright yellow, inclining to red.

The most brilliant part of his character was his military talents. No man, even in that romantic age, carried personal courage and intrepidity to a greater height; and this quality gained him the appellation of the lion-hearted (*cœur de lion*). He passionately loved glory, especially military glory; and as his conduct in the field was not inferior to his ardour, he seems to have possessed every talent necessary for acquiring it. He was open, frank, and generous to his equals, but haughty and domineering to his inferiors. He was more ambitious to be distinguished as a valiant knight than as a good king. He neglected the affairs of his kingdom, and was prodigal both of the blood and treasure of his subjects in the indulgence of his own propensity for war. He possessed, however, many amiable and excellent qualities which would have borne better fruits in a more enlightened age.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

THE CRUSADES.—The principal feature in Richard's reign appears to have been the part he took in the Crusades. Excited by the enthusiasm, which extended itself through all classes of society, against the infidels, in conjunction with his ruling passion for military

RICHARD THE FIRST.

glory, Richard exhausted the resources of his kingdom, in preparations to join the Christian host in Palestine ; and joining Philip of France he set out with an army of a hundred thousand men. His great valour raised him to the command of the whole forces of the crusaders ; and he carried on a warfare more glorious than useful, with Saladin, the renowned Saracen monarch, whom he at length defeated in the great battle of Ascalon. His army, however, was too much exhausted to be able to prosecute the victory, and a three years' truce* with Saladin enabled Richard to return to his kingdom, the distracted state of which required his presence.

On his way home, in travelling through Germany, he was seized by the Archduke of Austria, with whom he had quarrelled in Palestine, and thrown into prison, where he was so long closely confined, that his subjects remained in total ignorance of his fate. His discovery is said to have been effected by one Blondel, a minstrel, who had been attached to his service, who after wandering over many lands in search of his master, at last found out the place of his captivity by hearing him repeat, with his harp, a favourite air played by the minstrel outside the walls of his prison. Richard was now ransomed by his English subjects, and returned to his dominions after an absence of four years, fifteen months of which he had spent in a dungeon.

The remainder of Richard's reign was spent in a war with France, which was terminated only by his death. Having laid siege to the castle of a baron of Limosin,

* The truce was for three years, three months, three weeks, three days, and three hours, a number supposed, in that ignorant age, to possess some magical virtues.

JOHN.

who had found a treasure upon his estate, Richard claimed it, as sovereign of Guienne. Here he was wounded in the shoulder, by an arrow, from a cross-bow. The wound mortified, through unskilful treatment, and he died in a few days, on the 6th of April, 1199 :

“ And left the name at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.”

It was during the crusades that the custom of using coats of arms was first introduced into Europe. The knights, cased up in armour, had no way to make themselves known and distinguished in battle, but by the devices on their shields ; and these were gradually adopted by their posterity and families, who were proud of the pious and military enterprises of their ancestors.

In this reign the City of London began to assume a new form with respect to its government ; to have a mayor, and to be divided into several corporations or societies, now termed companies.

VII.

CHARACTER OF JOHN.

THIS prince was tall in person, of a good shape, and agreeable countenance. His disposition is strongly delineated in the transactions of his reign. He was slothful, shallow, proud, and imperious ; cruel, treacherous, cowardly, and inconstant ; abject in adversity, and overbearing in success ; hated by his subjects, over whom

JOHN.

he tyrannized to the utmost of his power ; detested by the clergy, whom he oppressed with exactions, and despised by all the neighbouring princes of Europe.

Though he might have passed through life without incurring such a load of odium and contempt, had not his reign been perplexed by the turbulence of the barons, the rapaciousness of the Pope, and the ambition of such a monarch as Philip Augustus, his character would never have exempted him from the scorn of his people. However, it must be acknowledged, that his reign was not altogether barren of laudable transactions. He regulated the form of the civil government of the City of London, and several other places in the kingdom : he was the first who coined sterling money ; introduced the laws of England into Ireland, and granted to the Cinque-ports those privileges of which they are still possessed.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

MAGNA CHARTA.—The barons of England, fired with indignation at the meanness and cowardice of John, in submitting to the dictation of the Pope and his nuncio ; and oppressed by the heavy taxes with which he loaded them, had recourse to arms, and demanded a re-establishment of the laws of Edward the Confessor, and a renewal of the charter of Henry the First, which being refused by the King, they chose Robert Fitz-Walter for their general, marched to London, and besieged him in the Tower. The king complied when he could no longer resist, and agreed to meet the barons in a meadow between Windsor and Staines, called *Runnymede*, a place before used for councils, and for public debates.

JOHN.

This meeting took place on the 15th June, 1215 ; John being unable to obtain supplies from his people, and finding himself too weak to withstand their demands, granted what they desired. This was the origin of that famous charter of liberties, called *Magna Charta*, which he was obliged to sign, and also the charter of the liberties of the forest, documents that have since been esteemed the foundations of English liberty.

Although the principal object of the *Great Charter* was to secure the rights of the higher orders of the State, yet those of the lower or great body of the people were not disregarded ; and the attainment of this great object was hailed with lively satisfaction by all classes of society.

The faithless king, however, though compelled to sign the *Charter*, had no intention of observing it. He retired to the Isle of Wight, where he employed himself privately in raising a body of foreign troops, and in procuring a *bull*, or decree, from the Pope, annulling the charter. He then suddenly attacked the barons, who were wholly unprepared, and committed the most horrid cruelties on them and their dependants. Upon this the barons applied for assistance to the King of France, and offered the crown to his son Louis. This prince accordingly invaded England with a powerful army, and entered London, the citizens doing homage to him as their sovereign. His conduct, however, excited the suspicions of the English nobles as to his intentions towards them. Many of them returned to John, who was once more at the head of a considerable army. But as he was marching from Lynn, in Norfolk, into Lincolnshire, the rear of his army was overtaken *by the tide*, and all his carriages, treasures, and bag-

HENRY THE THIRD.

gage, were swept away. He himself escaped with difficulty, and arrived at Swinstead Abbey, where grief and agitation threw him into a fever. He was removed to Newark, and died on the 19th of October, 1216, in the fiftieth year of his age, and eighteenth of his reign. Some writers say that he was poisoned by a monk.

VIII.

CHARACTER OF HENRY THE THIRD.

THE most striking feature in Henry's character is, his incapacity for government, which rendered him as much a prisoner in the hands of his own ministers and favourites, as when detained a captive in the hands of his enemies. From this cause, rather than from insincerity or treachery, arose his negligence in observing his promises; since he was too easily induced, for the sake of present convenience, to sacrifice the lasting advantages arising from the trust and confidence of his people. He was a prince of very mean talents; irresolute and arbitrary; destitute of economy or courage. Yet he merited praise for his aversion to cruelty; for he contented himself with punishing the rebels in their effects, when he might have taken their lives. He was prodigal to excess, and therefore always in necessity. Notwithstanding the great sums he levied from his subjects, and though his wants were extremely pressing, he could not help squandering away his money upon worthless favourites, without considering the difficulty he always

HENRY THE THIRD.

found in obtaining supplies. He was of a middle size, and robust make, and his countenance had a peculiar cast from his left eye-lid, which hung down so far as to cover part of his eye.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

ENGLAND was in a wretched state during the long reign of this monarch, owing to the extreme feebleness of the government. No man was secure in his life or property ; and whole villages were frequently plundered and burnt by the bands of robbers who overran the country. Very often the juries who were assembled to try such criminals, proved to be their own companions. Even the higher orders and members of the king's household were guilty of such practices, and said in excuse of their enormities, that, receiving no wages from their master, they were obliged to rob for their support. At this time, the Jews suffered intolerable oppression, not only in England, but over all Europe. Henry extorted great sums from them ; in one year he made them pay sixty thousand marks, a sum equal to the whole yearly revenue of the crown. King John, his father, once demanded ten thousand marks from a Jew at Bristol, and on his refusal, ordered one of his teeth to be drawn every day till he should comply. The Jew lost seven teeth, and then paid the money. They suffered similar treatment under Henry's successor, Edward ; and the cruelties they underwent in his reign are a strong proof of the effects of prejudice ; for Edward was not a cruel prince, and the Jews were the only portion of his subjects whom he oppressed.

HENRY THE THIRD.

THE BARONS.—Henry succeeded to the throne at nine years of age ; and when he grew up he appeared totally unfit to maintain his authority against the turbulent barons, whose long habits of resistance to the crown rendered them ungovernable. At that time they possessed fortified castles in various parts of the kingdom, by means of which they oppressed their vassals and the common people, and often set the king himself at defiance. The conduct of the Baron de Breauté may be mentioned as an instance. When thirty-five verdicts were at one time found against him in a court of justice, on account of his having driven that number of persons from their lands, he came to the court with a body of armed men, seized the judge, and imprisoned him in Bedford Castle ; and it was only after an open war with the king's troops that he was subdued. Availing themselves of the soft and easy temper of the king, the barons set no bounds to their lawless conduct ; and a civil war would have ensued, had it not been for the influence of the clergy, who threatened the barons with excommunication, if they persisted in their contempt of the royal authority,—a threat which, in that age, seldom failed in its effect.

THE PARLIAMENT.—The most active amongst these nobles was Simon de Montford, Earl of Leicester, who took the lead in the civil dissensions which troubled the latter part of Henry's reign ; to him, however, the nation is primarily indebted for the representative government of England, which, during succeeding ages, has conferred so many advantages on the people. The great councils of the nation now first began to receive the name of *Parliament*. The frequent and excessive demands for money made by the king and his foreign

EDWARD THE FIRST.

favourites, afforded the barons grounds for resisting his authority. The parliament refused the supplies they had granted ; and the king was obliged to allow them to draw up a new plan of government. All the former officers of state were now dismissed, and twenty-four barons, at the head of whom was Montford, Earl of Leicester, were appointed to finish the new plan. This laid the foundation of the *House of Commons*. They ordered that *four Knights of the Shire* should be chosen by each county, and *Deputies* by the cities and towns ; who should inquire into the grievances of the people, and lay them before the ensuing meeting of parliament. This parliament assembled in the year 1265, and is considered the beginning of the *House of Commons* ; the representatives of the counties, cities, and boroughs now, for the first time, sitting as members of the parliament ; though it does not appear that they sat as a separate body till the reign of Edward the Third.

Henry confirmed the two great charters granted by his father, and granted a charter to the town of Newcastle, in which he gave the inhabitants a licence to dig coal. This is the first mention of coal in England.

IX.

CHARACTER OF EDWARD THE FIRST.

EDWARD was a prince of dignified appearance, tall in stature, comely in his features, with piercing black eyes, and of an aspect that commanded respect and esteem. His constitution was robust, his strength and

EDWARD THE FIRST.

dexterity, perhaps unequalled in his kingdom. His legs are said to have been somewhat long in proportion to his body; whence he derived the epithet of *Long-shanks*. In the qualities of the head, he equalled the greatest monarchs who have sat on the English throne; he was cool, penetrating, sagacious, and circumspect. The remotest countries resounded with the fame of his courage; and all over Europe he was considered as the flower of chivalry. Nor was he less accomplished in the cabinet than in the field. He re-modelled the laws for administering justice, so as to render them more sure and summary: he fixed proper bounds to the different courts of jurisdiction; settled a new and easy method of collecting the revenue, and established wise and prudent regulations for preserving peace and order among his subjects. Yet, with all these good qualities, he cherished a dangerous ambition, to which he did not scruple to sacrifice the good of his country.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

SUBJECTION OF WALES.—Edward the First resolved to make himself master of Wales, and reduce it to entire submission to the English crown. The people of that country were the Ancient Britons, who had maintained their freedom, when the Romans and Saxons subdued the greater part of the island. They had always been troublesome and dangerous enemies to England. It was their practice to make frequent incursions, and ravage the country whenever it was disturbed by internal disputes, or engaged in wars abroad. They had taken part in the rebellion of the Earl of Leicester, in the last reign, and their Prince, Llewellyn, had

EDWARD THE FIRST.

refused to do the usual homage to Edward for his territories. Seizing this pretext, Edward invaded Wales; and Llewellyn, after a brave defence of his country, was defeated and slain, in December, 1282. David, his brother, escaped from the battle, and remained some time in concealment; but being taken, he was most unjustly condemned and executed as a traitor to a government he had never acknowledged.

In order to extinguish the spirit of liberty, which he conceived to be much animated and encouraged by the songs of the Welsh bards, or minstrels, he adopted the horrible resolution, of ordering them all to be collected and put to death. It is related, that, in order to reconcile the people to his government, and somewhat to soften their resentment for this cruelty, he assembled them together, and promised to give them a prince, a Welshman by birth, and one who could speak no other language. On their acclamations of joy and promise of obedience, he invested in the principality his second son, Edward, then an infant, who had been born at Caernarvon. The death of his eldest son, Alphonso, soon after, made young Edward heir of the monarchy; the principality of Wales was fully annexed to the crown; and henceforth gives the title of Prince of Wales to the eldest son of the sovereign of England.

SCOTLAND.—Edward conceived the design of extending his sway over Scotland. The death of Alexander III., and his infant grand-daughter, opened the crown of that kingdom to several candidates, among whom were Robert Bruce and John Baliol. The dispute between them was referred to Edward, who availed himself of the opportunity, and advanced upon Scotland with a

EDWARD THE FIRST.

large army, under pretence of deciding their differences. He summoned the Scottish barons before him, and declared in favour of Baliol, whose feeble character made him unsuspecting of duplicity. He then proceeded to treat Baliol and the Scots as his subjects; and, on Baliol unexpectedly revolting against such treatment, Edward defeated his army at Dunbar, took him prisoner, obliged him to renounce his crown, and then allowed him to retire into France, where he died.

Edward now treated the Scots like a conquered people, till, roused by the example of the celebrated Sir William Wallace, they rose against their oppressor. Under this brave leader they maintained a glorious but unequal contest for eight years. Scotland at length was overwhelmed by the great forces of Edward; and the unfortunate Wallace, who refused to surrender, wandered among the mountains with a few adherents; but was at length betrayed into Edward's hands, and brought to London; where, after being treated with great indignity, he was condemned and executed as a traitor, on the 23rd of August, 1305.

The death of Wallace has fixed an everlasting stain on the memory of Edward.

The Scots regained possession of their ancient kingdom under Robert Bruce, the grandson of the rival of Baliol, who was crowned king. Edward, inflamed with rage, vowed that he would march into Scotland and never return till he had subdued it. He kept his vow, for he never returned. After many fruitless attempts against Bruce and his adherents, Edward was taken ill at Carlisle, and died, 7th July, 1307, enjoining his son, with his last breath, never to give up the enterprise, till Scotland was subdued.

X.

CHARACTER OF EDWARD THE SECOND.

THIS prince strikingly resembled his father in the accomplishments of his person as well as in his countenance ; but in other respects he seems to have inherited only the defects of his character, for he was cruel and illiberal, without his courage or capacity. He had levity, indolence, and irresolution, in common with other weak princes ; but the distinguishing foible of his character was that unaccountable passion for a reigning favourite, to which he sacrificed every other consideration of policy and convenience, and at last fell a miserable victim to his folly. He abandoned the attempt to conquer Scotland, and allowed himself to be entirely governed by Piers Gavestone, the dissolute companion of his youth, whom his father had banished the kingdom. In his society he spent his time in frivolous amusements, till the barons, provoked by the insolence of the favourite, and the imbecility of the monarch, had recourse to arms and put Gavestone to death.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

BATTLE OF BANNOCKBURN.—The king was at length compelled to prosecute the war with Scotland ; and, calling out the whole military force of the kingdom, marched into that country at the head of a hundred thousand men. Bruce could muster only thirty thousand, and these unequal forces met at a place called Bannockburn, near Stirling. A battle took place on

EDWARD THE SECOND.

the 25th of June, 1315, in which the English were defeated with great slaughter, and Edward himself narrowly escaped by flight. This battle decided the contest, and secured the independence of Scotland.

THE SPENCERS.—Edward, unmindful of the fate of Gavestone, made choice of a new favourite, in the person of Hugh de Spencer, and thus again roused the enmity of the nobility. Another rebellion broke out, headed as before, by the Earl of Lancaster. The rebels, however, were defeated, and Lancaster being taken was put to death with the same cruelty which he had shown to Gavestone. But Spencer and his father soon incurred the general hatred, and Queen Isabella, a violent and profligate woman, flying to France with her son, the nobility sent for her. She returned, and collected a numerous party of the banished nobles. The king fled at her approach, and the unfortunate Spencers were taken, and both put to death, the father being in the ninetieth year of his age.

EDWARD'S DEATH.—The king was seized while attempting to take shelter in Wales. He was placed under the custody of two ruffians, Maltravers and Gournay, whose instructions from the infamous queen may be learned from their actions. They endeavoured to put an end to his life by a course of brutal treatment. They hurried him from place to place in the middle of the night and half-naked. Among other acts of cruelty, it is said they shaved him for sport in the open fields, using filthy water from a neighbouring ditch ; an insult which his fortitude, hitherto great, could not withstand. Finding that he continued to live notwithstanding their brutalities, they resolved to murder him, and having conveyed him to Berkeley Castle, in Gloucestershire,

EDWARD THE THIRD.

they accomplished their design in the most diabolical and unheard of manner. His horrid shrieks, however, betrayed the dreadful secret, and the crime was soon afterwards made known by the confession of one of the murderers. This shocking deed was done on the 21st of September, 1327, in the twentieth year of his reign.

“The shrieks of death through Berkeley’s roofs that ring,
Shrieks of an agonising king.”

In this reign there happened the most terrible earthquake that had ever been felt in England : also, a famine, which lasted three years, and destroyed a vast number of the people.

XI.

CHARACTER OF EDWARD THE THIRD.

EDWARD THE THIRD was one of the greatest princes that ever swayed the sceptre of England, whether we consider him as a warrior, a lawgiver, a monarch, or a man. He was tall, majestic, and well-shaped, with a piercing eye, and aquiline visage. He excelled most of his contemporaries in feats of arms and personal address. He was courteous, affable, eloquent, and agreeable in conversation ; and had the art of commanding the affections of his subjects without seeming to solicit popularity. He was a constitutional knight-errant. and his example diffused the spirit of chivalry through the whole nation. The love of glory was certainly the predominant passion of Edward, to the gratification of which, he did not

EDWARD THE THIRD.

scruple sometimes to sacrifice the feelings of humanity, the lives of his subjects, and the interest of his country. Nothing could have induced or enabled his people to submit to the weight of taxes with which they were encumbered in this reign, but the love and admiration of his person, the fame of his victories, and the wisdom of his legislation.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

THE military spirit of Edward the Third tended considerably to impoverish his country, both by withdrawing the services of the ablest part of its population, and by the direct taxation required to support his troops. War was esteemed the noblest profession ; the soldier was paid at a rate double that of the labourer and cultivator of the soil. But need for money compelled Edward to increase the privileges which the middle classes already began to enjoy. They had now considerable weight in the legislature, for the representatives of the commons were allowed to form a distinct legislative body. In 1343, the knights of the shires were separated from the barons, and sat with the burgesses, which gave much additional influence to the Lower House of Parliament. Their Speaker not only presided in their deliberations, but pleaded for their rights and privileges. They remonstrated against official misconduct, and chose the person who should preside over them.

Seventy parliaments were summoned during this reign ; and the members or representatives received regular "wages" from their constituents for their services in the House of Commons.

EDWARD THE THIRD.

EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE.—This heroic and virtuous prince was commonly called the "Black Prince," from the colour of his armour, which was entirely sable. At sixteen years of age he won the great battle of Cressy, when it was said the French lost thirty thousand men, and the Kings of Bohemia and Majorca were slain, together with a great number of the French nobility and gentry. King Edward, who was placed on an eminence from which he could survey the battle, was urged to send succour to his son, but he refused, saying that his son should be indebted to his own merit only for victory. This was on the 26th of August, 1346.

Upon the death of Philip, King of France, who was succeeded by his son John, King Edward again invaded that kingdom in two places, but being himself obliged to return to England, he left the command of the army to the Black Prince, who found himself at the head of only about twelve thousand men, while King John marched against him with an army of sixty thousand. On the 18th September, 1356, the two armies came in sight of each other near Poitiers. The Black Prince, on seeing such an army advancing upon him, is said to have exclaimed, "God help us ! nothing remains for us, but to fight bravely." The Cardinal of Perigord, who was with the French army, endeavoured, by meditation, to prevent the shedding of blood. He found Prince Edward willing to agree to any terms consistent with the honour of himself and his army ; but the French king would agree to nothing less than the prince surrendering himself prisoner with a hundred of his attendants. The prince replied, "That he would never be made a prisoner but with his sword in his hand ;" and the troops prepared for battle.

EDWARD THE THIRD.

On the following morning the armies engaged, and, after a desperate encounter, the French were completely routed. The French king fought with great valour; his nobles fell around him, and his son, scarce fourteen years of age, was wounded by his side. Finding himself almost alone, he called aloud, "Where is my cousin, the Prince of Wales?" intimating his willingness to surrender to so noble an enemy. At length, having thrown down his sword, he was taken, and conducted to the prince, whose generosity was now as remarkable as his skill and courage had been before. He received the captive king with such marks of kindness and respect, that John burst into tears, and declared that, notwithstanding the greatness of his misfortune, he rejoiced that he had fallen into the hands of so generous an enemy. On the 24th of May, 1357, Edward the Black Prince entered London, on his return from the victory of Poitiers, accompanied by John, the captive King of France, with a numerous and splendid cavalcade. In 1363, a very magnificent entertainment was given in the city by Henry Pycard (the mayor in 1357) to the Kings of England, France, and Cyprus, with Edward the Black Prince, and a large company of eminent and noble guests.

Edward the Black Prince was handsome in person, elegant in manners, and possessed a noble and generous heart. From his courage, as well as from his known principles of honour and humanity, he was the delight of the nation. He died on the 8th of June, 1376, in the 46th year of his age. The parliament attended his corpse to Canterbury, where he was interred in the cathedral.

King Edward distinguished himself by instituting the

RICHARD THE SECOND.

Order of the Garter. He also took the title of *King of France*, and quartered the fleur-de-lis with his own arms, at the same time adding the motto *Dieu et mon droit*, or God and my right. He died at Richmond in Surrey, on the 21st of June, 1377, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and was interred in Westminster Abbey.

XII.

CHARACTER OF RICHARD THE SECOND.

RICHARD THE SECOND had a very graceful person, and was of a lively disposition. He was, however, a weak, vain, and rather inconstant prince; fond of flattery, and a slave to ostentation. He was also addicted to idleness; and, though brave by starts, naturally fearful and irresolute. His pride and resentment prompted him to cruelty and breach of faith, while his necessities compelled him frequently to exact large sums of money from his people, and to degrade the dignity of his station and character. In addition to his personal expenditure for dress, and other articles of ostentation, at one period of his reign ten thousand followers were provisioned from his palace, and three hundred servitors were employed in his kitchen.

Richard was only eleven years of age when he succeeded his grandfather; but a regency was appointed in the persons of his uncles, the Dukes of Lancaster, York, and Gloucester, sons of the late king.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

WAT TYLER'S INSURRECTION.—In 1380, a poll-tax

RICHARD THE SECOND.

being raised on all persons above fifteen years of age, for the assistance of Ferdinand, King of Portugal, against John, King of Castile, it was levied with the greatest rigour and brutality by the collectors, on which an insurrection broke out, and, some historians say, three hundred thousand men appeared in arms in the neighbourhood of London, headed by one Wat Tyler, a blacksmith of Deptford. The young king (his uncles being out of the kingdom) took refuge in the Tower. The multitude entered the city, murdering every one who appeared to be a gentleman or a foreigner, and destroying the houses of the nobility. The king, at length, determined to meet and confer with them, and accordingly went among them with a few unarmed attendants, when he spoke to the multitude in so gentle a manner, and gave them such assurances of redress, that some thousands of them retired quietly to their homes.

The more desperate of the party, however, under Tyler himself, continued their ravages. On the following day, he and his followers, twenty thousand in number, met the king in Smithfield, attended by a small body of horsemen. Wat requested to have a conference with the king himself, which being granted, he demanded that the laws should be abolished, and the government re-modelled according to certain fantastical notions which he himself had formed. While addressing the king, he took occasion frequently to lift his sword, as if to intimate what Richard might expect, if his terms were not complied with. This insolent behaviour so exasperated William Walworth, the Mayor of London, who attended the king, that, without considering the danger of the act, he split Wat's skull with his sword, and laid him dead at his feet. This bold act

RICHARD THE SECOND.

happened to succeed, and soon after, the insurgents, having lost their leader, quietly dispersed.

RICHARD'S DEPOSITION AND DEATH.—The occurrences of the greater part of Richard's reign are without interest. By a course of folly and misconduct he lost the affections of all ranks. In 1392, the Londoners refusing to lend him a sum of money, he took away their charter, and removed the courts of justice to York. He continued to extort money from his subjects, and for inconsiderable sums yielded up many of his possessions abroad. Seventeen counties were condemned as guilty of treason, because they resisted his infamous exactions ; but at length a rebellion was raised, and he was obliged to shut himself up in Conway Castle, in Wales. He soon after submitted to Henry, Duke of Lancaster, and was sent to the Tower. A parliament being called, he was solemnly deposed, and Henry proclaimed King, on the 30th September, 1399. After this, Richard was removed to Pontefract Castle, in Yorkshire ; and it is said, that on the 14th of February, 1400, Sir Pierce Exton, with eight ruffians, undertook to murder him, hoping, thereby, to please King Henry IV., and rushed into his room, when Richard bravely wrested a pole-axe from one of the assassins, with which he slew four of them ; but Exton, mounting on a chair behind him, struck him on the head with such violence that he immediately dropped down dead, in the thirty-fourth year of his age. His body was first interred at King's Langley, in Hertfordshire, but afterwards removed to Westminster Abbey by order of Henry the Fifth. Some writers say Richard died of starvation in his dungeon.

HENRY THE FOURTH.

XIII.

CHARACTER OF HENRY THE FOURTH.

HENRY THE FOURTH, surnamed of *Bolingbroke*, was the son of the Duke of Lancaster. He was of middle stature, well-proportioned, and perfect in all the exercises of arms and chivalry ; his countenance was severe and haughty, his disposition sullen and reserved. He possessed a great share of courage, fortitude, and penetration ; was naturally imperious, though he bridled his temper with caution ; superstitious, though without the least tincture of true religion ; and meanly parsimonious, though justly censured for ill-judged profusion and want of proper economy. His claim to the throne laid the foundation for the sanguinary wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster, which afterwards desolated England.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

THE SCOTTISH INVASION.—In 1402-3, the Scots invaded England, under the Earl of Douglas, but were defeated at Halidown-hill, by the Earl of Northumberland, and his son Henry Percy, surnamed *Hotspur*, with the loss of 10,000 men ; and in this victory several earls and other persons of consequence were made prisoners ; but the king ordering Northumberland to deliver up the prisoners into his hands, the earl was so exasperated, that he, with *Hotspur* his son, and other lords, agreed to crown Edward Mortimer, Earl of March, whom Owen Glendower kept prisoner in Wales. The rebel army was encamped near Shrewsbury, headed by

HENRY THE FOURTH.

Henry Hotspur, the Earl of Worcester, and the Scotch Earl of Douglas : and the king marched directly thither with 14,000 choice troops, headed by the Prince of Wales, and the Earl of Dunbar ; and on the 20th of July, 1403, at a place afterwards called Battlefield, he obtained so complete a victory, that about 10,000 of the rebels were killed, among whom was the brave Hotspur, who fell by the hands of the Prince of Wales.

Another insurrection broke out in 1405, of which the Archbishop of York was the principal leader, assisted by the Earl of Northumberland, Thomas Mowbray, Earl Marshal, and other noblemen, who assembled a large body of troops at York and published a manifesto, declaring the king a traitor, and their resolution to place Mortimer, the lawful heir, upon the throne. But this disturbance was soon suppressed by the policy of Ralph Nevill, Earl of Westmoreland ; and all the leaders, including the archbishop, were executed. This was the first instance of the punishment of death being inflicted upon a clergyman of high rank.

THE BURNING OF HERETICS.—In this reign the cruel practice of burning people on account of their religion was first introduced. The celebrated Wickliffe, had, some time before, preached against the errors of the Church of Rome, and his doctrines made considerable progress in England. Henry himself, before his accession to the throne, was believed to favour them ; but he was persuaded to suppress them ; and several of the *Lollards* (as the followers of Wickliffe were called) were burnt in Smithfield.

Henry died in the Jerusalem-chamber, at Westminster, on the 20th March, 1413, and was interred in Canterbury cathedral.

HENRY THE FIFTH.

XIV.

CHARACTER OF HENRY THE FIFTH.

HENRY THE FIFTH, surnamed of *Monmouth*, was tall and slender, with a long neck, engaging aspect, and limbs of the most elegant form. He excelled most of the youth of that age in agility, and the exercise of arms ; and was hardy, patient, and laborious. His valour was such as no danger could startle and no difficulty oppose ; nor was his policy inferior to his courage. He managed the dissensions among his enemies with such address, as proved him consummate in the arts of the cabinet. He was temperate, modest, and devout ; scrupulously just in his administration, and severely exact in the discipline of his army, upon which he knew his glory and success mainly depended. In a word, he was without an equal in the arts of war, policy, and government ; though his great qualities were somewhat tarnished by his ambition, and his propensity to cruelty.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

CHIEF JUSTICE GASCOYNE.—Henry the Fifth, in his father's life-time, had been wild and unruly ; and his conduct, notwithstanding the bravery and high spirit which he sometimes displayed, had much embittered his father's latter years. On one occasion, one of his profligate companions being committed to prison for a robbery, by Chief-justice Gascoyne, Henry behaved with great violence, and even struck the chief-justice, who immediately ordered him to be carried to prison. Henry, feeling the impropriety of his conduct, submitted to his

HENRY THE FIFTH.

punishment, acknowledging its justice. When this circumstance was reported to the king, he joyfully exclaimed, "Happy is the king who has a magistrate so resolute in the discharge of his duty ; still happier in having a son so submissive to the laws." No sooner did Henry ascend the throne than his behaviour was totally changed. He chose a council of state, composed of men of distinguished wisdom, and commanded those who had been the companions of his irregularities, either to change their manners or never more to approach his person.

THE BATTLE OF AGINCOURT.—Henry, having revived the English title to the crown of France, in 1415, embarked an army of near fifty thousand men, and invaded that kingdom. He landed at Havre de Grace, and laid siege to Harfleur, which surrendered in five weeks. Soon after, the French King, having assembled an army three times as numerous as that of Henry, challenged him to fight, and Henry consented, though the English army was now reduced by sickness to little more than nine thousand men. They met near the village of Agincourt, on the 25th of October. The French, trusting to their superior numbers, passed the night before the battle in boisterous hilarity and rejoicings, and even sent to Henry, to know what he would give for his ransom ; to which he replied, "a few hours would show whose care it would be to make that provision." Henry passed the night in making the most skilful arrangements for the battle. In the morning, the onset was made by the English, who, after using their arrows with great effect, rushed on the French with their swords and battle-axes, and drove them back with great slaughter. Henry had disposed his few men to such advantage, and behaved

HENRY THE FIFTH.

with such extraordinary skill and courage himself, that he gained a complete victory. The Duke of Alençon, who had sworn to kill or take the king, clove his helmet, but was struck down by Henry, and slain. This battle was very fatal to France, from the immense loss of her nobility slain or made prisoners ; it is said that ten thousand persons were killed, and fourteen thousand made prisoners. The loss to the English was very trifling.

Henry returned to England in triumph, and the next year again invaded France, but met with no resistance, and a treaty was concluded, by which it was settled that the French King should enjoy his dignity for life, that Henry should marry his daughter Catherine, and be heir to his crown ; and that France and England should be, from that time, united in one government.

Henry married Catherine and returned to England ; but the *Dauphin* (or heir of the French King) refused to submit to the treaty. Upon this, Henry returned to France with a large army, but, while marching towards the river Loire, he was seized with a pleuritic fever, and died on the 31st of August, 1422.

His widow, Catherine of France, afterwards married Owen Tudor, a Welsh gentleman, by whom she had a son, Edmund, Earl of Richmond, who was the father of Henry, Earl of Richmond, afterwards *Henry the Seventh*.

HENRY THE SIXTH.

XV.

CHARACTER OF HENRY THE SIXTH.

HENRY THE SIXTH possessed a sound and healthy constitution, and was naturally insensible to affliction. He was such a stranger to cruelty and revenge, that he frequently sustained personal indignities of the grossest nature, without discovering the least mark of resentment. He was pious, compassionate, and charitable, and so inoffensive that he would have adorned a cloister, though he was totally unfit for a throne. He succeeded to the crown when only nine months old ; reigning in England under the tutelage of his uncle, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, and in France under that of his uncle the Duke of Bedford.

Henry founded the college of Eton, near Windsor, and King's college, in Cambridge, for the reception of those scholars who had begun their studies at Eton.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

HENRY CROWNED KING OF FRANCE.—Henry's misfortunes began in France by the death of his grandfather, Charles the Sixth, not quite two months after the death of his father, King Henry. This gave great advantage to the *Dauphin*, who was called Charles the Seventh, and being crowned at Poitiers, he disputed with Henry the crown of France : yet, for some time, the English continued to have great success in that kingdom, and every thing seemed to promise the entire possession of France, when it was prevented by an unforeseen blow. A girl,

HENRY THE SIXTH.

known by the name of *Joan of Arc*, or, *the Maid of Orleans*, suddenly appeared at the head of the French army, and, in 1429, made the English raise the siege of that place. From that moment Henry's interest in France rapidly declined. However, he was carried to Paris, and there solemnly crowned with a double crown, in the cathedral church, on the 17th of December, 1430. At length, a truce was concluded between the two crowns, after which a marriage was brought about between King Henry and Margaret of Anjou, daughter of René, King of Sicily; a woman of great capacity, courage, and ability. The English were now everywhere defeated, and the only places that remained to them in France were Calais, and the earldom of Guines.

The unfortunate Joan of Arc was taken prisoner by the English, and accused of witchcraft; and afterwards burnt at Rouen, by the order of the Duke of Bedford.

THE RIVAL CLAIMS TO THE ENGLISH THRONE. — In 1450, Richard, Duke of York, began to entertain the design of aspiring to the throne. His right was certainly preferable to that of the king. Henry derived his descent from John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, the *third* son of Edward III., while the Duke of York was descended from Lionel, the *second* son of that monarch. The Duke of York at last raised an army, for the purpose, as he pretended, of reforming the government. He was opposed by the Duke of Somerset; and a battle took place at St. Alban's, when Somerset was killed, and the king, who was with him, taken prisoner. The queen, Margaret, continued the contest; and several battles took place, with various success. At length the queen's forces were defeated at Northampton, by the Earl of Warwick, brother to the Duchess of York; and

HENRY THE SIXTH.

the king, who had joined the queen, was again taken prisoner. The Duke of York now openly claimed the crown. The parliament refused to dethrone Henry, but declared that the Duke should be his successor. The Duke of York, however, was killed in an engagement with Margaret's forces, at Wakefield-green, in 1460 ; and this, for a time, turned the scale, and sunk the interest of the House of York.

Edward, the Duke of York's eldest son, revived the quarrel ; and, putting himself at the head of his party, became a favourite of the people. He soon obliged Margaret to retire from London ; and entering the city amidst general acclamations, was proclaimed by the title of Edward the Fourth, on the 4th of March, 1461.

Margaret retired to the North, and being again joined by a large army, she met Edward and the Earl of Warwick at Towton, in Yorkshire, on the 29th March, and a battle took place in which her army was routed ; and as Edward had ordered that no quarter should be given, thirty-six thousand of the Lancasterians were killed in the field or the pursuit. She was again totally defeated at Hexham : the king remained some time in concealment, but was discovered and confined in the Tower. The queen escaped to Flanders.

Edward, now for a time in possession of the throne, disgusted the people by his misconduct ; and having insulted and slighted the Earl of Warwick, to whom he was indebted for the crown, that powerful nobleman turned against him, and headed an extensive party formed to restore King Henry. Warwick became reconciled to the queen, and in a few days they were at the head of an army of sixty thousand men. Edward was now obliged to fly to Holland, and Henry was once

EDWARD THE FOURTH.

more for a few months King of England. His title was confirmed by the parliament ; and Warwick obtained among the people the name of the *King-maker*, or the setter-up and puller-down of kings.

Henry's reign is rendered memorable by the insurrection in 1450, of Jack Cade, an Irishman, who, assuming the name of Mortimer, pretended that he was related to the Duke of York. He defeated fifteen thousand of the king's troops in a regular engagement, and entered London in triumph ; where, striking the London stone in Cannon Street with his sword, he exclaimed, " Now, Mortimer is lord of this city." He caused Cromer, Sheriff of Kent, and Lord Say, an unpopular minister, to be beheaded ; but at length, being driven out of London, and finding himself deserted by his followers, who had quarrelled about the division of their plunder, he fled into Kent, and was killed by a gentleman named Eden, in whose garden he had concealed himself.

XVI.

CHARACTER OF EDWARD THE FOURTH.

EDWARD THE FOURTH was a prince of the most elegant person, and insinuating address ; endowed with the utmost fortitude and intrepidity ; possessed of uncommon sagacity and penetration ; but was vindictive, perfidious, profligate, and cruel ; and seemed to have the same pleasure in witnessing an execution as a pageant. He appears to have possessed not one liberal thought, nor one single sentiment of humanity.

EDWARD THE FOURTH.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

THE RIVAL CLAIMS CONTINUED.—Some time after Edward's expulsion and flight to Holland, trusting to his partisans in England, he ventured to return. Though at first coldly received, his followers increased, and London, when he appeared before it, opened its gates. Henry, after a shadowy sovereignty of seven months was again pulled from the throne, and Warwick's party daily diminished. He, therefore, found it necessary to bring the contest to the issue of a battle. The contending parties met at Barnet, on the 14th of April, 1471, and, after a desperate engagement, Warwick's troops were entirely defeated, and himself and his brother, the Marquis of Montague, slain.

Queen Margaret had just returned from France, where she had been soliciting supplies, when she received the news of Warwick's defeat and death. Her fortitude gave way under this terrible shock, and she sank senseless on the ground. She now resolved, with her remaining followers, to make another effort, and met Edward's army at Tewkesbury. Here her troops were likewise defeated. The Duke of Somerset and a number of other persons of distinction were dragged from a church, in which they had taken refuge, and beheaded. The queen and her youthful son were brought before Edward, who asked the young prince, in an insulting manner, how he dared to invade his dominions? The spirited boy replied, "I came to recover my father's kingdom!" on which the brutal tyrant struck him on the face with his gauntlet, and the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester stabbed him with their daggers. Margaret and her

EDWARD THE FIFTH.

husband were thrown into the Tower, where, it is generally believed, the unfortunate Henry was murdered by the Duke of Gloucester (afterwards Richard III). Margaret, after being five years in the Tower, was ransomed by the King of France for fifty thousand crowns.

Edward the Fourth now kept unmolested possession of the throne. His reign presents no feature worthy of particular notice, with the exception of the introduction of the art of printing into England, which took place in 1471, by one Caxton, a mercer ; the first printing press was set up in Islip's chapel, Westminster abbey, under the patronage of the abbot.

King Edward died at Westminster, on the 9th of April, 1483, and was interred in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, near the unfortunate Henry, his predecessor, whose tomb speaks a moral lesson to the spectator.

" Here o'er the ill-fated king the marble weeps,
And fast beside him once fear'd Edward sleeps ;
Whom not the extended Albion could contain,
From old Belerium to the northern main ;
The grave unites, where e'en the great find rest,
And blended lie the oppressor and the oppress'd."

XVII.

EDWARD THE FIFTH.

THIS unfortunate young king reigned only two months and thirteen days.

He was the eldest son of Edward the Fourth, and

EDWARD THE FIFTH.

was born in 1470. When his father died he was at Ludlow, but being sent for to London, he, on the 4th of May, received the oaths of the principal nobility; and his uncle, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was made protector of the kingdom. He prevailed upon the queen-mother to deliver up to him her youngest son, the Duke of York, the young king's brother, and sent them both to the Tower, under pretence of their waiting there till all was prepared for the coronation. Richard now proceeded to rid himself of those who might hinder the accomplishment of his design. He despatched orders to behead Lord Rivers and others, whom he had imprisoned in Pontefract Castle; and then summoned a council in the Tower, which was attended among others by Lord Hastings, a nobleman who had shown a disposition to oppose his intentions. While the council was sitting, he pretended he had discovered a plot against his life, ordered several of the members to be arrested, and Lord Hastings, whom he accused of sorcery, to be immediately beheaded; swearing that he would not dine till he had seen his head. Hastings was accordingly hurried out to the little green in front of the Tower chapel, and beheaded on a log of wood that lay in the way. Meanwhile, by the assistance of the Duke of Buckingham, Sir John Shaw, Lord Mayor of London, and Dr. Shaw his brother, he had the two young princes declared illegitimate, and then caused himself to be acknowledged King of England, pretending to accept the crown with reluctance. The queen and Jane Shore were accused of sorcery; the latter was taken into custody, but released on doing penance. Sir Roger Brackenbury, lieutenant of the Tower, refusing

RICHARD THE THIRD.

to comply with Richard's cruel designs, he, for one night only, gave the command of that fortress to Sir James Tyrell, and he, as it is said, procured two villains, named Forrest and Dighton, who in the dead of the night entered the chamber where the king and his brother lay asleep, and smothered them in the bed clothes. The bones of these unhappy children were discovered in the reign of Charles the Second, and buried in Westminster Abbey, where a monument to their memory is still to be seen.

XVIII.

CHARACTER OF RICHARD THE THIRD.

RICHARD THE THIRD was, through the whole course of his life, restrained by no principle of justice or humanity ; and it appears that he endeavoured to maintain the crown by the same fraud and violence which he had made use of to obtain it.

He certainly possessed an uncommon solidity of judgment, a natural fund of eloquence, the most acute penetration, and such courage as no danger could dismay. He was dark, silent, and reserved ; and such a complete master of dissimulation, that it was impossible to dive into his real sentiments, when he wished to conceal his designs. He is represented as having been small of stature, cloudy and forbidding in aspect, and so much deformed, that he was surnamed *Crook-back* ; but this is doubtful ; some writers say, on the contrary,

RICHARD THE THIRD.

that he was tall, dignified, and handsome. He was the last king of the Plantagenet race.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

THE BATTLE OF BOSWORTH FIELD.—Richard having broken his promises to the Duke of Buckingham, who had been chiefly instrumental in placing him on the throne, that nobleman took up arms against him, in order to assist Henry, Earl of Richmond, the last branch of the House of Lancaster, to obtain the crown; but Buckingham being betrayed to the king's officers at Shrewsbury, by a man who had been his servant, for the sake of a great reward offered for his apprehension, he was carried to Salisbury, and beheaded without any legal process. However, the Earl of Richmond obtaining assistance from the Duke of Brittany, soon made his appearance in Wales, with about two thousand men, which shortly increased to five thousand, and with this small army he engaged the king's forces, consisting of sixteen thousand men, at Bosworth, in Leicestershire. The battle was fought on the 22nd of August, 1485, on a large flat piece of ground about three miles from the town. Lord Stanley, who commanded a body of troops in Richard's army, was privately in the interest of Richmond; and no sooner was the battle begun, than Stanley suddenly turned round with his men, and attacked the flank of Richard's army, which could not withstand the shock. Richard seeing all was lost, rushed into the middle of the enemy, and fell, fighting with the fury of a maniac. After the battle, his body was found, stripped, and covered with wounds and dirt. It was thrown across a horse and

RICHARD THE THIRD.

carried to Leicester, and interred in the Grey-friars church, without the least ceremony. Thus fell Richard the Third, in the thirty-fourth year of his age, after an infamous reign of two years. He was the only English monarch since the conquest, that fell in battle, and the second who fought in his crown. Henry the Fifth appeared in his at Agincourt, which was the means of saving his life, by sustaining a stroke with a battle-axe, which cleft it. Richard's falling off in the engagement, was taken up and secreted in a bush, where it was discovered by Sir Reginald Bray, and placed upon Henry's head in the field. Hence arises the device of a crown in a hawthorn bush, at each end of Henry's tomb in Westminster Abbey.

ADVANCEMENT OF CIVILISATION.—Thus ended the royal line of the Plantagenets, which commenced with Henry the Second, and possessed the English throne for three hundred and thirty years. During the earlier part of that period, England advanced in commerce, and the arts of civilised life. It is said, that in Edward the Third's reign, there were thirty thousand students in the University of Oxford. During the wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster, every pursuit was abandoned but that of arms; and the people again became fierce and barbarous. The art of printing, introduced into England by the celebrated William Caxton, became one means, under Providence, of spreading abroad that religious light, which led eventually to the Reformation. The writings of Wickliffe and others, exposing the errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome, were widely circulated; and, as men became more enlightened, they grew weary of a church and a system, supported by superstition and intolerance.

HENRY THE SEVENTH.

A rapid advance in religious information and general knowledge now commenced ; and from this period, a corresponding improvement took place in the state of society.

XIX.

CHARACTER OF HENRY THE SEVENTH.

IN person, this prince is represented as being tall, straight, and well shaped, though slender ; of a grave aspect, and saturnine complexion. He inherited a natural fund of sagacity, which was much improved by study and experience ; nor was he deficient in personal bravery, or political courage. He was cool, distrustful, and designing ; and of all the princes who had sat upon the throne of England, the most sordid and selfish. At the same time it must be admitted he was a wise legislator, assiduous in the exercise of religious duties, and exact in the administration of justice, when his own private interest was not concerned ; though he frequently used religion and justice as cloaks for oppression. His mind appears to have been actuated by two ruling passions, namely, the fear of losing his crown, and the desire of amassing riches ; and these motives influenced his whole conduct.

On the whole, however, notwithstanding the faults of his character, his policy was favourable to the rights and independence of the people, and his reign was of great benefit to the English nation.

HENRY THE SEVENTH.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

A FEW months after Henry's coronation, he married Elizabeth, daughter of Edward the Fourth, thus strengthening his claim to the throne by uniting the Houses of York and Lancaster, and finally putting an end to the desolating strife of the rival Roses.

LAMBERT SIMNEL, THE IMPOSTOR.—Soon after he came to the throne Henry was disturbed by an insurrection, caused by one Lambert Simnel, who pretended that he was the Earl of Warwick, son of the late Duke of Clarence, brother to Edward the Fourth. Being supported by some of the nobility, this misguided youth claimed the crown, and having procured a body of foreign troops, landed in England; but not being joined by the people, as he expected, his adherents were routed by the king with great slaughter, and Simnel himself taken prisoner. He was afterwards pardoned, and made a turnspit in the king's kitchen; but those who had been concerned with him were punished by heavy fines.

PERKIN WARBECK'S INSURRECTION.—Another insurrection of a similar kind, though of more formidable extent, broke out in 1493. A youth named Perkin Warbeck made his appearance, and pretended that he was the Duke of York (youngest son of Edward the Fourth), who, it was said, had escaped from the Tower by the assistance of the men hired to murder him and his unfortunate brother, the young king. Warbeck strongly resembled the family of Plantagenet; this greatly favoured the imposture, and he acted his part so skilfully, that multitudes of persons were deceived.

HENRY THE SEVENTH.

He appeared at the court of the Duchess of Burgundy (sister of Edward the Fourth), and solicited protection as her nephew. It was believed that the Duchess was concerned in the scheme, though some represent her as being herself deceived. She received Warbeck with transports of joy, real or pretended, and treated him with the distinction due to the heir of the English crown. A confederacy began in England in his favour, but was discovered, and a number of persons engaged or suspected were taken and executed.

Warbeck having failed in his attempt on the coast of Kent, and in another in Ireland, went to Scotland, and so entirely convinced James the Fourth of his being the Duke of York, that he warmly espoused his cause, gave him in marriage Lady Catherine Douglas, daughter of the Earl of Huntley, and invaded England. A treaty of peace, however, was soon concluded ; and Warbeck finding his hopes of assistance from Scotland at an end, put himself at the head of an insurrection which had broken out in Cornwall, in consequence of some new tax. Being joined by three thousand of the discontented people, he laid siege to Exeter, but fled on the approach of the king's troops. His wife fell into the king's hands, who, pitying her hard fate, treated her kindly, and gave her a pension, which she enjoyed till her death. Perkin soon after gave himself up, and his life was spared, though he was kept in custody. Having made his escape, however, he was re-taken, sent to the Tower, and shortly after hanged at Tyburn.

Henry assisted the Emperor Maximilian against Charles the Eighth of France ; he made war on the Scots ; instituted the band of gentlemen-pensioners, and built the chapel adjoining Westminster Abbey,

HENRY THE EIGHTH.

which still bears his name. He also founded several colleges, by which he obtained the character of a pious prince, and a friend to learning, though he was remarkable for avarice, and grievously oppressed his people by numberless exactions. He died at Richmond on the 22nd of April, 1509, aged 52.

A little before his death Henry published a general pardon to all his subjects, released from prison all debtors who did not owe more than forty shillings to any one man, paying their creditors out of his own purse; and by his will commanding his successor to make restitution to all men whom he had wronged, but to this desire his son paid no regard. It has been said that he left behind him 1,800,000*l.* the greatest part of which he had extorted from his subjects.

XX.

CHARACTER OF HENRY THE EIGHTH.

HENRY THE EIGHTH, before he became corpulent, was a prince of graceful and handsome personage, and commanding aspect, rather imperious than dignified. He possessed a good understanding, which was not much improved by the nature of his education. In the early part of his reign, his pride and vanity seemed to have the ascendancy over all his other passions, though from the beginning to the end he was headstrong, and impatient of contradiction or advice. He was prodigal, pedantic, and superstitious, and delighted in pomp and

HENRY THE EIGHTH.

pageantry, the baubles of a weak mind. His passions, soothed by adulation, rejected all restraint; and as he was an utter stranger to the fine feelings of the soul, he gratified them at the expense of justice and humanity, without remorse or compunction. From the abject compliance of his subjects he acquired the most despotic authority over them; and became rapacious, arbitrary, and so cruel, that he appeared to delight in sacrificing their lives to his own caprice.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

HENRY ascended the throne at the age of eighteen. His first remarkable act was the punishment of Empson and Dudley, two lawyers, whom his father had employed to extort money from the people by every way they could devise. Persons had been committed to prison by these agents of the late king, but never brought to trial; and were glad to purchase their liberty by the payment of heavy sums, which were called "mitigations," or "compositions." By these and other exactions, Henry the Seventh amassed immense sums of money in his treasury. Henry the Eighth gratified the citizens of London, and indeed the whole nation, by ordering Empson and Dudley to be beheaded on Tower Hill, August, 1510. In the same year he engaged in a war with France, without any reasonable motive, and after an inglorious contest, concluded a peace in 1514. His arms were, however, more successful against the Scots, who, under James the Fourth, invaded England. They were totally defeated, and the king slain, with the greatest part of his nobility, on the 9th September, 1513, in the memorable battle of Flodden.

HENRY THE EIGHTH.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE REFORMATION.—Henry, soon after his coronation, had married Catherine of Arragon, the widow of his brother Arthur. This marriage had subsisted many years, when, affecting to have scruples on account of its legality, he became desirous to have it dissolved. He applied to the Pope for a divorce, but the pontiff, unwilling to break with the Emperor of Germany, who was related to Queen Catherine, kept the matter in suspense, and Wolsey, the king's minister, seconded this policy. At last, when Henry's patience was almost exhausted, it was reported to him that a young ecclesiastic, named Cranmer, had said that the king should spend no more time in negotiating with the Pope, but should propose to all the universities of Europe the plain question, "Can a man marry his brother's widow?" The king was highly pleased with this hint, and exclaimed, "The man has got the right sow by the ear." The advice was adopted, and opinions against the legality of the marriage were obtained. The queen was divorced, and Henry immediately married Anne Boleyn. Cranmer afterwards became Archbishop of Canterbury, and enjoyed Henry's confidence during the rest of his life.

The Pope, on being informed of the divorce of Queen Catherine, pronounced against Henry the sentence of excommunication, at the same time declaring her to be his only lawful wife. This determined Henry to separate wholly from the Church of Rome, of which he had hitherto been a zealous adherent, and had even acquired the title of "Defender of the Faith," in consequence of having written a book against the doctrines of the Reformation. In the year 1534 he was declared by the parliament head of the Church, and the autho-

HENRY THE EIGHTH.

rity of the Pope was abolished in England. In 1537, the Bible was first printed in English, and ordered to be used in the churches. In 1538, all the monasteries and nunneries were suppressed, and their estates and revenues taken possession of by the king.

This was the foundation of that great and important change in religious worship called "The Reformation ;" and which was followed, eventually, by the entire abolition of the Roman Catholic Church (as a national establishment), in this country.

CARDINAL WOLSEY.—This extraordinary and ambitious prelate, who had risen from a very mean origin, was at one time Pope's Legate, Archbishop of York, and Lord Chancellor of England ; and in 1515 became Prime Minister. He held the bishoprics of Durham and Winchester successively, the Abbey of St. Albans *in commendam*, and the bishoprics of Lincoln, Bath, and Hereford, in farm ; and had the disposal of all ecclesiastical benefices, so that his revenues were equal to those of the crown. He built the palace of Hampton Court, and in 1525 gave it to the king his master.

For some time before the king's separation from Catherine, Wolsey had been declining in favour, in consequence of his opposition to Henry's wishes. He now fell into total disgrace, and was ordered to retire to his diocese of York, but was soon afterwards arrested on a charge of high treason. On his way to London he was taken ill, and died in Leicester Abbey. In his last moments he regretted, in striking terms, that he had not served his God with the same fidelity he had used towards the king. He died on the 29th of November 1530. He is said to have taken poison, in order to put an end to his miserable life.

HENRY THE EIGHTH.

The conduct of Henry the Eighth in his domestic concerns is without a parallel in history. He had six wives, and some of them very remarkable for their beauty; but none of them enjoyed much happiness. Catherine of Arragon was cruelly divorced. Anne Boleyn was wrongfully beheaded. Jane Seymour probably escaped the same fate, only by dying about a year after her marriage. Anne of Cleves was arbitrarily divorced. Catherine Howard was somewhat justly beheaded; and Catherine Parr, his last wife, owed her escape more to her own prudence and good fortune, than the humanity of her husband. She was more than once in great danger, from her inclination to the reformed religion; but her address and caution saved her, and she retained the king's favour till his death.

Towards the end of his life Henry became more and more violent and tyrannical. The last objects of his cruelty were the aged Duke of Norfolk, who had long served him with fidelity, and the duke's son, the Earl of Surrey, a young man of singular accomplishments. On a groundless pretence they were arrested. The son was condemned and beheaded on Tower Hill; and the father's life was saved the day before that on which he was to have been executed, by the death of the king himself. This event happened on the 28th of January, 1547. Henry founded six new bishoprics, viz. Westminster, Oxford, Peterborough, Bristol, Chester, and Gloucester, all of which, except Westminster, are still episcopal sees.

EDWARD THE SIXTH.

XXI.

EDWARD THE SIXTH.

THIS amiable young prince reigned only six years and five months ; and as he succeeded his father at nine years of age, he was little more than fifteen years old when he died. On his accession to the throne, his uncle the Duke of Somerset was appointed Protector of the kingdom during his minority. He showed great attachment to the principles of the Reformation which he had imbibed while young ; and he is represented as a prince of a most promising disposition. He confirmed his father's grant of St. Bartholomew's and Christ's Hospitals, and founded Bridewell and St. Thomas's Hospitals. In addition to this he founded several schools, which were mostly endowed out of the church lands. He also kept a Journal, which is preserved in the British Museum, in which he regularly entered all the important transactions of his reign.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

THE REFORMATION ESTABLISHED.—The reign of Edward the Sixth is remarkable for the establishment of the reformed religion. This "glorious work" proceeded with steadiness and regularity. Somerset, the Protector, had long adopted the doctrines of the Reformers ; and his first care was to appoint a commission, at the head of which was Archbishop Cranmer, and Ridley, afterwards Bishop of London, to draw up a book of articles for the use of the Church. In a very short time the greater part of the nation received the reformed doctrines and

EDWARD THE SIXTH.

worship, though several distinguished persons still adhered to popery, among whom were Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, and the king's elder sister, the Princess Mary.

The Protector determined if possible to execute the late king's project of uniting Scotland with England. He therefore demanded the young Queen of Scots in marriage for King Edward, but the same proposal being made by France in behalf of the *Dauphin*, she was sent into that kingdom ; on which the duke invaded Scotland. At this time, the Reformation had made small progress there ; the queen-dowager (widow of James the Fifth,) was strongly attached to the Romish faith. Somerset totally defeated the Scots army at Pinkie, a few miles from Edinburgh, on the 10th of September, 1547. The young Queen of Scots was afterwards married to the *Dauphin* of France.

SOMERSET, elated with his high dignity, forgot his original prudence and moderation. He put his own brother, Thomas, Lord Seymour, to death for some supposed personal injuries ; and by this cruel act, by his introduction of foreign troops into England, and by the great wealth he had acquired, he soon lost the favour of the people, and fell a victim to the arts of his enemies. He was impeached, and charged with a design to seize the king's person, and to imprison the Earl of Warwick. For this he was condemned, and the young king being in a manner forced to sign the warrant for his execution, he was beheaded on Tower-hill, on the 22nd of January, 1552.

The Earl of Warwick, now Duke of Northumberland, succeeded to Somerset's power, and assumed the office of Protector, and at length, on the king being taken

QUEEN MARY.

ill, brought about a marriage between his fourth son Lord Guildford Dudley, and the Lady Jane Grey, eldest daughter to the Duke of Suffolk, and persuaded Edward to settle the crown on her ; his sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, having both been declared illegitimate during the life of their father ; and the young king, hoping to save the Reformation from impending destruction, appointed the Lady Jane Grey as his successor.

Immediately after this act, the king became rapidly worse. His physicians were dismissed by order of Northumberland, and he was put under the care of an ignorant old woman, who had undertaken to restore him to health. The use of her medicines appeared to increase the violence of the disease ; and the youthful monarch expired on the 6th of July, 1553, in the sixteenth year of his age, and the seventh of his reign. He was well skilled in the Latin and French tongues, and had obtained some knowledge of the Greek, Italian, and Spanish. His person was handsome, and he was remarkable for his piety and humanity.

XXII.

CHARACTER OF QUEEN MARY.

MARY was the *first princess* that ever swayed the sceptre of England. The Empress, Matilda, was crowned during the reign of Stephen, but she was obliged to retire without performing any act of sovereignty.

The chief characteristic of Queen Mary was bigotry,

QUEEN MARY.

added to this she was proud, imperious, and avaricious ; and possessed of few agreeable qualifications. She was far from being happy, particularly in her marriage ; for her husband, being much younger than herself, treated her with cold neglect and haughty reserve ; and after a very short stay in England, left it, and never returned.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

LADY JANE GREY.—Immediately after the death of King Edward, the Duke of Northumberland had his daughter-in-law, Lady Jane Grey, proclaimed Queen. This lady, a young woman of singular virtue and talents, had taken no part whatever in the transactions by which she was brought to the throne ; indeed, she was totally ignorant of them. She received the news of her elevation with equal surprise and grief ; but was obliged to yield to circumstances, and suffered herself to be conveyed to the Tower, where it was then usual for the sovereigns of England to reside some days after their accession. Learning, however, that the Princess Mary, determined to support her claim, was at the head of forty thousand men, she resigned the crown, and immediately retired to her own habitation. Her father-in-law endeavoured to quit the kingdom, but was arrested.

MARY now took undisputed possession of the throne. Northumberland, with several of his adherents, was condemned and executed. Sentence of death was also pronounced against Lady Jane Grey, and her husband Lord Dudley, a young man whose character resembled her own. This young couple, neither of whom had reached the age of eighteen, after a year's imprisonment

QUEEN MARY.

in the Tower, were both beheaded by Mary's order. Their sad fate excited universal pity and indignation.

Soon after Mary's accession to the throne, she married Philip, afterwards King of Spain, son of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, who was then living ; and, in violation of the most sacred promises, immediately commenced a most dreadful persecution of the Protestants, which was carried on by Bonner, Bishop of London, and Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester. Great numbers of persons suffered martyrdom at the stake, among whom were Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, and Ferrar ; and all the prisons in the kingdom were crowded with pious sufferers, who chose to submit to persecution, and even death, in the most horrible form, rather than violate their consciences. Even the Princess Elizabeth was closely watched, and obliged to conceal her religious sentiments.

These inhuman persecutions, which began with persons of station and influence, soon extended to all classes and degrees. Even women and children were among the victims. During four years, in which these proceedings lasted, near three hundred persons were put to death at the stake ; among whom were one archbishop, four bishops, twenty-one clergymen, eight gentlemen, eighty-four tradesmen and artificers, a hundred husbandmen, servants, and labourers, fifty-five women, and four children.

The last remarkable event in Mary's reign, was her engaging the nation in a war, which her husband was carrying on against France. Its result was the loss of Calais, which had been in the possession of England above two hundred years. This circumstance occasioned a clamorous discontent among the people, and

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

so afflicted the queen, that she was heard to say, that when dead, the name of *Calais* would be found engraven on her heart. She did not long survive it, but died on the 17th of November, 1558, in the forty-third year of her age, after a cruel reign of five years and four months. She was buried in Henry the Seventh's chapel, Westminster Abbey.

XXIII.

CHARACTER OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

ELIZABETH is represented by the Papists as a monster of cruelty, which is not to be wondered at, considering her severity to them. It is, indeed, difficult to excuse her beheading Mary Queen of Scots, and the rigour with which she sometimes punished both Papists and Protestant dissenters ; but she certainly understood the art of governing in an eminent degree, and, by her wise administration, raised England to a high pitch of prosperity and power. Her Court was the school of able ministers, great statesmen, and distinguished warriors. She understood the Greek, Latin, French, Spanish, and Dutch languages, and makes a considerable figure among the learned ladies of her time. Her conversation was sprightly and agreeable, her judgment solid, and her application indefatigable. But though she possessed all the highest qualities of a monarch, she had a large share of the weaknesses of a woman ; being excessively vain of her person, very open to flattery, and remarkably

v

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

susceptible of tender feelings ; and her glorious reign, on which Providence for a long time poured innumerable blessings, ended at length in a most dismal manner, occasioned, it was generally believed, by the death of her favourite minister, the Earl of *Essex*.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROTESTANT FAITH.—Elizabeth, immediately after her accession, proceeded to re-establish the Protestant religion. She began by recalling all who were banished, and setting free all who were in prison for their religious opinions ; and her first parliament passed a series of acts which settled the Religion of the State in the manner in which we have ever since enjoyed it. She also assisted the Protestants in Scotland, France, and the Netherlands, against their respective sovereigns, by whom they were cruelly oppressed and persecuted.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.—The events of Mary's unhappy life belong to the history of Scotland. When she had been deprived of the crown, and forced to take refuge in England, Elizabeth, prompted by personal dislike, as well as apprehension of the claims of a rival to the English throne, treated her with a persevering cruelty, which has fixed a deep stain on the memory of the English queen. Though Mary had entered the kingdom as a suppliant for protection, she kept her for eighteen years in confinement, on the pretext that she had been guilty of crimes in her own country ; and at last, procured her condemnation on the charge that she was concerned in a conspiracy against Elizabeth's life. A conspiracy of this nature had been attempted, in which

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

one Babington was implicated, together with some Popish priests from the seminaries abroad ; but being discovered, they were, to the number of fourteen, condemned and executed. As the Queen of Scots appeared by some letters to have known something about it, Elizabeth resolved to prosecute her under an act of parliament, made the preceding year, whereby the person by whom, or for whom, anything should be attempted against the life of the queen, was liable to suffer death. Commissioners were accordingly sent to try her at Fotheringay Castle, in Northamptonshire, where she was in custody ; and the sentence which they passed upon her was confirmed by Elizabeth, and on the 7th of February, 1587, she was beheaded. She suffered with great calmness and resignation.

THE SPANISH ARMADA.—Philip of Spain, shortly after the death of Mary, Queen of England, made proposals of marriage to her sister Elizabeth, and deeply resented her refusal of him. Actuated by this feeling, and a desire to support the Romish religion, he determined to invade England. For this purpose he raised an army of sixty thousand men, and equipped a fleet of one hundred and thirty ships, larger than any that had ever been seen in Europe.

The expected arrival of this great fleet, which had been called "The Invincible Armada," filled England with terror ; but the queen, undismayed, mustered the forces of her kingdom. They were greatly inferior to those of Philip, but derived confidence from the example of the queen. She visited the camp, at Tilbury Fort, near Gravesend, rode through the ranks, and addressed the soldiers in animating language, "I know," said she, "that I have but the body of a weak and

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

feeble woman ; but that I have the heart of a king, and of a King of England, too ; and think it foul scorn that Parma, or Spain, or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realms ; to which, rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take arms ; I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field !”

In the meantime, the Armada sailed ; but the unwieldy vessels were much damaged by stormy weather before they neared the English coast. They were met by the small but active English fleet, under the Earl of Effingham as admiral, and Drake, Hawkins, and Forbes, as vice-admirals ; who, instead of coming to a close encounter, hovered about them, and cut off the straggling vessels as they sailed up the Channel. At last, the Spaniards came to anchor off Calais, expecting to be joined there by the Duke of Parma. Effingham sent eight fire-ships among them, and, profiting by the confusion thus caused, attacked, and completely dispersed them. They were so terrified by the fire-ships, that they cut their cables, and put to sea in the utmost confusion ; the English admirals took and burnt twelve of their ships, and the rest were almost entirely destroyed by tempests. In short, the poor Spaniards resolved to make the best of their way home ; and of this prodigious and boasted armament only fifty-three ships returned to Spain, and those in a shattered condition. Queen Elizabeth went to St. Paul's Cathedral to return thanks to God for this decisive victory.

In 1596, Queen Elizabeth sent out a fleet and army under Howard, Essex, and Sir Walter Raleigh, to the coasts of Spain, which plundered Cadiz, burnt the merchant-ships at Porto-Real, took and destroyed thirteen

JAMES THE FIRST.

Spanish men-of-war, and did other considerable damage. In 1598, Henry the Fourth of France having entered into a separate treaty of peace with the King of Spain, Queen Elizabeth and the States entered into a new treaty to carry on the war against that monarch by themselves. On the 25th of February, 1601, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, was beheaded.

Queen Elizabeth died on the 24th March, 1603, in the seventieth year of her age, and the forty-fifth of her reign, after having named the Scottish King, James the Sixth, for her successor. She was interred in the chapel of Henry the Seventh, Westminster Abbey.

The first Royal Exchange in the City of London, was founded in this reign by Sir Thomas Gresham, 1566.

XXIV.

CHARACTER OF JAMES THE FIRST.

JAMES the Sixth of Scotland and the First of England was of a middle stature, inclining to corpulency ; his address was awkward, his aspect mean, and his appearance slovenly. There was nothing dignified either in the composition of his mind or person. In the course of his reign he exhibited repeated instances of his ridiculous vanity, prejudices, folly, and littleness of soul. All that we can add in his favour is, that he was averse to cruelty and injustice, temperate in his living, kind to his servants, and desirous of acquiring the love of his subjects ; by granting that as a favour which they

JAMES THE FIRST.

claimed as a right. His reign, though ignoble to himself, was nevertheless beneficial to his people, who were enriched by commerce which no war interrupted. He was descended from Margaret, the daughter of Henry the Seventh, and with him began the reign of the Stuarts in England. He united the crowns of England and Scotland, and took the title of King of Great Britain.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.—In the first year of James's reign, a conspiracy was discovered, the object of which was to place upon the throne the Lady Arabella Stuart, who was also descended from Henry the Seventh, and, after James, the next heir to the crown. Of this conspiracy little is known ; but what renders it memorable, is the concern which the celebrated Sir Walter Raleigh had in it. He, with several others, was condemned to death ; but he was reprieved, and kept for thirteen years in confinement. He was afterwards set at liberty, and employed in an enterprise against the Spaniards in South America. Being unsuccessful, he returned to England, and was again imprisoned, and finally executed, in pursuance of his former sentence. This piece of injustice and cruelty appears to have proceeded from the king's desire to be on amicable terms with the Court of Spain, a marriage being then in contemplation between his son Charles and the daughter of the King of Spain.

THE GUNPOWDER PLOT.—In the year 1605, the conspiracy so well known by the name of the *Gunpowder Plot*, was discovered. The Romanists being disappointed in their expectations that James would become

JAMES THE FIRST.

a member of that faith, formed a plan for the destruction both of the king and parliament. The leaders were Catesby, a gentleman of good family ; and Percy, a descendant of the house of Northumberland. They employed a fellow named *Guy Fawkes*, who hired a vault under the House of Lords, as if for the purpose of containing fuel, in which he concealed thirty-six barrels of gunpowder, with the intention of blowing up the building, while the king was opening the session of parliament.

A short time before the meeting, Lord Monteagle, one of the peers, received a letter from an unknown hand, warning him not to attend the parliament. This nobleman laid the letter before the council, who were at a loss to conjecture its meaning ; but the king's sagacity suspected the truth ; and it was resolved to examine the vaults beneath the building. This, however, was purposely delayed till the night before the execution of the plot ; and the officers then found Guy Fawkes in the vault, disguised in a cloak, with a dark lanthorn, and tinder box and matches in his pocket, prepared to set fire to the powder. He was seized, and being put to the torture, divulged the whole of the conspiracy. Catesby and Percy fled to Warwickshire, where another party was already in arms. They were surrounded in a house where they had collected themselves, and after a desperate resistance, these leaders and several others were killed on the spot. Guy Fawkes and two Jesuits named Oldcorn and Garnet, with the other accomplices, were executed.

HENRY, Prince of Wales, James's eldest son died in 1612, when scarce eighteen years of age. He was a most amiable and accomplished prince, and a patron of

CHARLES THE FIRST.

learning and science. Granger says, "Arms, literature, and business, engaged the attention of this excellent young prince, who seems to have had neither leisure nor inclination for the pursuits of vice or pleasure. The dignity of his behaviour, and his manly virtues, were respected by every rank and order of men. Though he was snatched away in the early prime of life, he had the felicity to die in the height of his popularity and fame, and before he had experienced any of the miseries which awaited the royal family. It is remarkable, that the king, who thought himself eclipsed by the splendour of his character, ordered that no mourning should be worn for him."

King James died at Theobald's on the 27th of March, 1625, aged fifty-five, having reigned in England twenty-two years ; and left his crown to his second son Charles.

XXV.

CHARACTER OF CHARLES THE FIRST.

CHARLES THE FIRST was a prince of melancholy aspect, long visage, and pale complexion. He was of a middling stature, robust, and well proportioned. His perception was clear and acute, his judgment sound and decisive. In his private morals he was altogether unblemished and exemplary ; and, by his excellent conduct when young, he had much endeared himself to the nation ; but his education had given him by far too exalted an idea of the power of the crown, and to this

CHARLES THE FIRST.

in a great measure his fall may be attributed. In addition to this, he suffered himself to be guided by counsellors, who were not only inferior to himself in knowledge and judgment, but generally proud, partial, and inflexible; and he paid too much deference to the advice and desires of his consort, who was superstitiously attached to the errors of popery.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

THE CIVIL WAR.—The whole of this reign was a continued series of struggles between the king, who wanted to assume to himself the absolute power of disposing of his subjects' property, and leaving their grievances unredressed; and the parliament, who were willing to grant the necessary supplies, provided their grievances were redressed, and the right privileges of the subject secured; and these struggles at last produced a civil war. The first encounter between the armies of the king and parliament, was at Edgehill, on the 23rd of October, 1642. The first campaigns between the contending forces were favourable to the king; but the royalists suffered a total defeat at Marston Moor, in 1644. In this battle, the military talents of Oliver Cromwell were first brought into notice. On the 14th of June, 1645, was fought the famous battle of Naseby, which decided the quarrel between the king and the parliament, wherein the forces of the latter gained a complete victory; which was achieved principally by the courage and conduct of Cromwell. The king fled to Oxford; but upon the approach of General Fairfax, his majesty threw himself into the hands of the Scots army, which had come to the assistance of the parlia-

CHARLES THE FIRST.

ment, and was then besieging Newark. Charles's confidence in their loyalty was misplaced ; for they agreed to deliver him up, on receiving a large sum of money. He was conveyed to Holmby Castle, Northamptonshire, and afterwards to Hampton Court ; but having attempted to escape out of the kingdom, he was seized on the coast of Hampshire, and closely imprisoned in Carisbrook Castle in the Isle of Wight.

Meanwhile, the parliament made an effort to resist the tyranny of Cromwell and the army ; but Cromwell put an end to their existence, by a bold and decisive act. Colonel Pride, at the head of an armed force, surrounded the house, and excluded all the members but about sixty of the most furious Independents, who were favourable to Cromwell's intentions.

It now only remained to dispose of the king ; and his death was speedily resolved upon. To accomplish this wickedness, a vote was passed, declaring it treason for a king to levy war against his parliament, and the king was then brought to trial, for acts committed before this law was in existence. The Commons required the concurrence of the House of Lords, in this gross injustice ; but that body unanimously refused it ; and they then voted that the consent of the upper house was unnecessary.

A court, consisting chiefly of officers of the army, was appointed by the House of Commons to try the king. Being brought before this tribunal on three several days, he refused to acknowledge their right to sit in judgment on him. On the fourth day they examined some witnesses, to show that he had been in arms against the parliament, and then condemned him to suffer death on the scaffold. While being conveyed

CHARLES THE FIRST.

to and from this infamous court, he was grossly insulted by the soldiers and rabble, one of whom spat in his face. "Poor souls!" he calmly said, "they would treat their own generals in the same way for sixpence." A soldier, moved by pity, implored a blessing on him, on which he was knocked down by his officer. The king remarked that the punishment exceeded the offence.

It is recorded, that after he had received sentence of death, he spent his few last days in devout exercises. He refused to see his friends, and ordered them to be told that his time was precious, and the best thing they could do, was to pray for him. On Monday, the day before his execution, two of his children were brought to take their leave of him, viz., the lady Elizabeth, and the Duke of Gloucester. He first gave his blessing to the lady Elizabeth, bidding her, that when she should see her brother James, she should tell him that it was his father's desire, that he should no more look upon his brother Charles as his eldest brother only, but be obedient to him as his sovereign ; and that they should love one another, and forgive their father's enemies. Then he added, "Sweetheart, you will forget this." "No," said she, "I shall never forget it as long as I live." He bade her not grieve and torment herself for him ; for it would be a glorious death he should die, it being for the laws and liberties of this land, and for maintaining the true Protestant religion. After this, he took the Duke of Gloucester, a child then about seven years of age, upon his knees, saying to him, "Sweetheart, now they will cut off thy father's head;" upon which the child looked up with great earnestness upon him. The king proceeding, said, "Mark, child, what I say,

CHARLES THE FIRST.

they will cut off my head, and perhaps make thee a king ; but you must not be a king, so long as your brothers Charles and James do live ; for they will cut off your brothers' heads when they can catch them, and thine too at last : and therefore I charge you, don't be made a king by them." At which the child fetched a deep sigh, and said, "I will be torn in pieces first." Which expression, coming from a child so young, occasioned no little joy to the king.

On the 30th of January, 1649, King Charles was brought from St. James's Palace to Whitehall, and there beheaded in front of the Banqueting house, in the forty-ninth year of his age, and the twenty-fourth of his reign. "When he was arrived on the scaffold, he made a long address to Colonel Tomlinson : and afterwards turning to Colonel Hacker, he said, 'Take care you do not put me to pain.' Then, turning towards the executioner (who was masked), he said, 'I shall say but very short prayers, and when I thrust out my hands ——.' Then he asked the bishop for his cap, which, when he had put on, he said to the executioner, 'Does my hair trouble you?' who desiring it might be put under his cap, it was put up by the bishop and the executioner. Turning to the bishop, he said, 'I have a good cause, and a gracious God on my side ;' to which the bishop answered, 'There is but one stage more, which though turbulent and troublesome, yet it is a very short one ; it will carry you from earth to heaven ; and there you will find to your great joy, — a crown of glory !' the king added, 'I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance is.' After which, putting off his cloak, doublet, and his George, he gave the latter to the bishop, saying,

CROMWELL.

‘Remember.’ He wished the block might have been a little higher, but it was answered it could not be otherwise now. The king said, ‘When I put out my hands this way, then ——.’ He prayed a few words standing, with his hands and eyes lifted towards heaven, and then stooping down, laid his neck on the block. After a little time, the king stretched forth his hand, and the executioner took off his head at one stroke. When his head was held up to the people, there was nothing to be heard but shrieks and groans and sobs ; the unmerciful soldiers beating down poor people for this little tender of their affection to their prince. Thus died the worthiest gentleman, the best master, the best friend, the best father, and the best Christian, that the age in which he lived produced.”*

CROMWELL, AND THE COMMONWEALTH.

CHARACTER OF CROMWELL.

OLIVER CROMWELL was the son of a private gentleman, of Huntingdon, and was born on the 24th of April, 1599. Being the son of a second brother, he inherited a very small paternal fortune. From accident or intrigue, he was chosen member for Cambridge, in the long parliament ; but he seemed at first to possess no talents for oratory ; his person being ungraceful, his dress slovenly, and his elocution homely, tedious, ob-

* Clarendon.

CROMWELL.

scure and embarrassed. He made up, however, by zeal, what he wanted in natural powers ; and, being endowed with unshaken intrepidity and dissimulation, he rose through the gradations of preferment, to the post of lieutenant-general, under Fairfax ; but, in reality possessing the supreme command of the whole army ; and after a series of wonderful successes in England, Ireland, and Scotland, prompted by ambition, and aided by the most dexterous ingenuity and effrontery, he actually assumed the absolute dictatorship of the British nation.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

AFTER the death of King Charles, the House of Commons published a proclamation, forbidding all persons on pain of death, to acknowledge the late king's son, or any other as sovereign of England. They likewise abolished the House of Lords, thus taking into their own hands the sovereignty of the kingdom.

Their own House, which should be composed of five hundred and thirteen members, consisted then only of eighty ; a new great seal was ordered to be made, on which was engraven these words, "The Parliament and Commonwealth of England." The king's statue in the Royal Exchange had been already pulled down, and now this inscription was fixed in its place, "Charles, the last king, and the first tyrant."

ESCAPE OF CHARLES II.—After the decisive battle of Worcester, in which he was totally defeated by Cromwell, Charles, in his endeavours to escape from the kingdom, encountered many hardships, and met with some of the most singular and romantic adventures.

CROMWELL.

He wandered about the country for six weeks in all sorts of disguises, sometimes dressed as a postilion, sometimes in woman's apparel, and sometimes as a woodcutter. On one occasion he was obliged to pass a day and a night among the branches of an oak tree, where he actually heard the voices of the soldiers in pursuit of him. Here Charles and his companion Colonel Carlos climbed, by means of a henroost ladder ; and the family of the house (Boscobel) supplied them with victuals by means of the nut-hook. This tree is still standing, and is enclosed with a brick wall. Charles was obliged to travel almost alone through bye-paths and unfrequented roads, half spent with hunger and fatigue, till at length he found means to escape from the coast of Sussex, in a small fishing-boat, and was safely landed in Normandy.

THE COMMONWEALTH.—After the battle of Worcester, Cromwell returned to London, where he was met by the Speaker of the House of Commons, accompanied by the mayor and magistrates of the City in their formalities, and entertained by them at a public dinner, where the same honours were shown to him as had been paid to the kings. He began now to complain of the long parliament, which, on the 20th of April, 1653, he dissolved by force ; and two days after published a declaration of his reasons, signed by himself and his council of officers. On December 16th, he assumed the title of Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland ; and thus, in effect, became the absolute King of Great Britain. He, however, applied himself diligently to the management of the several parties in and out of the parliament, and supplied the courts of justice in Westminster Hall with the ablest lawyers, but acted

CROMWELL.

in the most arbitrary and oppressive manner, where his own interest was concerned.

He obtained an act of parliament abolishing royalty in Scotland, and annexing that country as a conquered province to England. War was then declared against the Dutch, in consequence of the ambassadors from the parliament to Holland having been murdered by the royalists there. During this war, several great engagements at sea took place between the English admiral, Blake, and the Dutch Admiral, Van Tromp; and at length the Dutch, humbled by repeated defeats, sued for peace.

In 1657, the parliament agreed to offer Cromwell the title of King; but, as he found this proposition disagreeable to his best friends, he declined it, and resolved upon a new inauguration, which was accordingly performed in Westminster Hall, June 26th, with all the splendour of a coronation.

His latter days were miserable, his favourite daughter on her death-bed upbraided him with his crimes. Conspiracies were formed against him, and a book was written entitled "Killing no Murder," to show that to kill him would be an act of virtue. Cromwell read this book, and is said never to have smiled afterwards. He wore armour under his clothes, and constantly kept a loaded pistol in his pocket. He travelled in a great hurry, attended with a numerous guard; never returned from any place by the road he went; and never slept above two or three nights in the same chamber. A tertian ague came at last to deliver him from this life of wretchedness and anxiety; and he died on the 3rd of September, 1658, in his fifty-ninth year. He had usurped the government nine years.

CHARLES THE SECOND.

RICHARD, his son, was the next day proclaimed Protector ; he was mild, easy, and void of ambition ; and finding a strong party was formed against him among the republican officers, he very wisely resigned his office : thus ended the Commonwealth of England. Richard retired to live on his paternal fortune at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, where he died in 1712.

XXVI.

CHARACTER OF CHARLES THE SECOND.

CHARLES THE SECOND, after an exile of twelve years in France and Holland, was restored to the throne of his ancestors 29th May, 1660, by the assistance of General Monk, whom he afterwards created Duke of Albemarle.

Charles was tall in stature ; his complexion was swarthy, and marked with strong harsh lineaments. His penetration was keen, his judgment clear, his understanding extensive, and his conversation lively and engaging. He was easy of access, polite and affable ; and his talents of wit and ridicule remarkable. Had he been limited to a private station, he would have passed for the most agreeable and best natured man of the age in which he lived. But these good qualities were overbalanced by his weakness and defects. He was irreligious, immoral, careless, and indolent ; neither eager to punish his enemies, nor to reward his friends. Numbers who had lost everything in his service, suf-

CHARLES THE SECOND.

ferred total neglect. His lenity, as well as his ingratitude, proceeded from the insensibility of his temper. In the midst of gaiety and immorality, he entirely neglected the duties of his station ; and the country, following the example of the Court, strict severity of manners was all at once changed into the most shameful irregularity and profligacy.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

IN 1662, the marriage between the king and Catharina, Infanta of Portugal, was solemnized. In 1663, the act of uniformity was carried into effect, by means of which the Church of England was freed from a great number of ministers, who refused to submit to her ritual as contained in the Book of Common Prayer. In 1664, war was declared against the Dutch, and on the 3rd of June a great victory was obtained over them at sea. In July there was another furious engagement, when the English gained a complete victory, destroying above twenty Dutch men-of-war, and driving the rest into their harbours ; though England suffered the humiliation of the Dutch fleet sailing up the Thames, and retiring in safety after burning three of our men-of-war in the river. This disgrace, happening in an unnecessary war, excited violent indignation among the people ; and the peace which followed was not concluded on terms calculated to appease the general discontent.

THE PLAGUE.—During these transactions, a dreadful pestilence broke out in London, which destroyed above one hundred and thirty thousand of the inhabitants. This was called “the Great Plague ;” many others of ~~ess~~ violence having visited England in preceding reigns.

CHARLES THE SECOND.

It commenced in Long Acre, towards the close of 1664, and continued to rage over all parts of the metropolis with unabated malignancy till the end of the following year. In August and September, 1665, it was at its height ; fifty thousand persons perished in seven weeks.

THE FIRE OF LONDON.—On the 2nd of September, 1666, a terrible fire broke out in London, commencing in the neighbourhood of Eastcheap ; which continued to rage for three days, and laid a considerable portion of the City in ashes. It destroyed six hundred streets, including eighty-nine churches, many hospitals and public edifices, and thirteen thousand two hundred and two dwelling-houses. The ruins, comprehending four hundred and thirty-six acres of ground, extended from near the Tower, along the river, to the Temple church ; and north-east along the city walls to Holborn Bridge. Very few lives were lost, but thousands were reduced to beggary by the loss of all that belonged to them. The *Monument* in Fish-street Hill, was erected to mark the locality in which it began.

THE RYE-HOUSE PLOT.—About the year 1683, a combination was formed by a number of distinguished persons to raise an insurrection against the king ; but they appear to have differed widely in their objects. The Duke of Monmouth, a natural son of the king, aspired to succeed his father to the throne. Lord William Russell, of the House of Bedford, proposed the exclusion of the Duke of York as being a Papist, and demanded a redress of grievances ; while Algernon Sydney, it was believed, wished to restore the republic. At the same time, a plot was entered into by a set of inferior persons to assassinate the king ; it was called the *Rye-house Plot*, from the place where they assembled. It was dis-

JAMES THE SECOND.

covered, and Lord Russell and Algernon Sydney were accused of being concerned in it ; and were condemned and executed, though there was not the slightest legal proof of their guilt. In January, 1685, King Charles was seized with an apoplectic fit ; and though he was recovered by bleeding, he lingered only a few days, and died on the 6th of February, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, after a reign of near twenty-five years. He was buried in the Chapel of Henry the Seventh, Westminster Abbey.

In 1660 the Royal Society was established. In 1675 the present St. Paul's Cathedral was commenced building by Sir Christopher Wren.

XXVII.

CHARACTER OF JAMES THE SECOND.

JAMES THE SECOND was a prince in whom some good qualities were rendered ineffectual by mistaken notions of the prerogative, excessive bigotry to the Romish faith, and an inflexible severity of temper. He was brave, steady, diligent, upright, and sincere, except when warped by religious considerations ; yet, even where religion was not concerned, he appears to have been proud and vindictive, and though he had proved himself an obedient and dutiful subject, he became one of the most intolerable sovereigns that ever reigned over a free people.

James wrote memoirs of his own life and campaigns

JAMES THE SECOND.

up to the Restoration ; and memoirs of the English affairs, chiefly naval, from the year 1660 to 1673.

On his accession, he made a speech to the privy council, promising to preserve the government both of the Church and State, as by law established, yet two days after he went publicly to mass.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

THE BATTLE OF SEDGEMOOR.—The discontent caused by the conduct of James in openly encouraging Popery, after his solemn promise to the contrary, induced the Duke of Monmouth to make another attempt on the crown. Having landed at Lyme, in Dorsetshire, with only one hundred followers, he was in a few days at the head of six thousand men. He published a declaration, stating that his sole motive for taking arms, was to preserve the Protestant religion, and to deliver the nation from the usurpation and tyranny of James, Duke of York. He was encountered by the king's troops at a place called Sedgemoor, near Bridgewater, on the 5th of July, 1685, and after a desperate engagement totally defeated. Monmouth escaped from the field, and wandered for some days about the country in a destitute state, and at last was discovered concealed in a ditch, and almost exhausted with fatigue and hunger. He was carried to London, and immediately condemned and executed on Tower-hill. His followers were punished with dreadful severity. A number were barbarously put to death by military execution, under General Kirke, on the field of battle ; and about three hundred and fifty were executed by form of law by order of the notorious Judge Jeffreys, who was sent

JAMES THE SECOND.

down to try the prisoners, for which service he was made Lord Chancellor.

SEVEN BISHOPS SENT TO THE TOWER. — James now openly attempted to establish Popery and arbitrary power. Finding the parliament an obstacle to his designs, he dismissed it, and never called another. The Popish priests appeared publicly in their habits in the streets ; a nuncio arrived from Rome, and James filled the official situations in the universities, with Roman Catholics. Seven of the bishops having remonstrated against these infamous and unlawful proceedings, he had them sent to the Tower and prosecuted for sedition. His power, however, was not sufficient to prevent their being acquitted. The acclamations caused by this event, reached the ears of the king, who asked what was the meaning of the noise. Some one answered it was nothing but the soldiers shouting for the delivery of the bishops. " Call you that nothing ?" the king exclaimed in a rage ; " but so much the worse for them." Immediately afterwards he dismissed two of the judges whom he understood to have been favourable to the bishops.

DEPOSITION AND FLIGHT. — In these circumstances, the people became greatly alarmed ; and immediately applied to William Henry of Nassau, Prince of Orange, who had married Mary, King James's eldest daughter, and was himself the son of that king's eldest sister. This prince landed at Torbay, on the 5th of November, 1688, and was joyfully received by the whole nation.

James made no resistance ; he only attempted to escape from the kingdom, and left his palace in disguise. He was discovered at Faversham, and, after being grossly insulted, brought back to London. He was

WILLIAM THE THIRD.

ordered by William to retire to Rochester, and was allowed, without molestation, to embark for France. The parliament having, by a vote passed in both Houses, declared that James had *abdicated the throne*, it was agreed that the Prince and Princess of Orange should reign jointly, but Mary had barely the title, the power being delegated exclusively to William. Thus was formed the famous period in English history, called "The Revolution."

King James retired to St. Germain, in France, where he died on the 16th, of September, 1701, aged sixty-eight, and was buried in the monastery of the Benedictines, in Paris.

XXVIII.

CHARACTER OF WILLIAM THE THIRD.

WILLIAM THE THIRD, was, in his person tall, thin, and of a delicate constitution: he was subject to an asthma, which occasioned a stooping in his shoulders: his complexion was dark, his eyes bright and sparkling; which illumined a face otherwise grave and repulsive. He was very sparing of speech; his conversation was dry, and his manner displeasing, except when in battle, when his deportment was free, spirited, and animating. In courage, fortitude, and equanimity, he rivalled the most eminent warriors of antiquity; and his natural sagacity made amends for the defects of his education, which had not been properly superintended. He was religious, temperate, and generally just and sincere; a

WILLIAM THE THIRD.

stranger to violent transports of passion, and might have passed for one of the best princes of the age, had he never ascended the throne of Great Britain. But the distinguishing feature of William's character was ambition : and this he gratified at the expense of the nation that raised him to sovereign authority. He aspired to the honour of acting as umpire in all the contests of Europe : and the second object of his attention was the prosperity of the country to which he owed his birth.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

THE English parliament having conferred the crown upon the Prince and Princess of Orange, required their assent to a declaration called the *Bill of Rights*, by which the power of the crown and the rights of the subjects were fixed. The levying of money and other acts of power, without consent of parliament, were declared unlawful ; and the freedom of election, the right of petitioning the sovereign, with other important privileges were asserted. It was provided that parliament should be frequently assembled ; that excessive bail (except in most extreme cases) should not be required, excessive fines imposed ; nor unnatural and unusual punishments inflicted.

Soon after the coronation, an attempt was made by the opposite party, to secure Scotland for King James, and the two armies met at *Killykrankie*, in Perthshire. Lieutenant-general Mackay, who commanded for King William, obtained a complete victory ; after which, the whole island of Great Britain submitted to the crown.

WILLIAM THE THIRD.

THE BATTLE OF THE BOYNE.—In Ireland, the majority of the people, being Papists, still adhered to King James; who, having obtained some assistance from France, resolved to maintain his pretensions. He landed at Kinsale, at the head of a small force, and made his public entry into Dublin. He soon found himself at the head of twenty thousand men, and was twice reinforced by the French, who each time joined him with five thousand men. He took Coleraine and Kilmore, and laid siege to Londonderry; but soon after returned to meet his parliament in Dublin, where he passed an act to attain between two and three thousand Protestant lords, ladies, clergymen and gentlemen, of high treason. At length King William sent a large body of troops to the assistance of the Protestants; and the following year, arrived in person.

On the 1st of July, 1690, he attacked James's army on the banks of the river Boyne, near Dundalk, and gained a complete victory over the French and Irish, and obliged James to retire first to Dublin, and afterwards to France, where he remained till his death in 1701. After defeating James's followers at Athlone, Galway, Limerick, and other places, William's army returned to England, and all Ireland was reduced to obedience.

DEATH OF QUEEN MARY.—This excellent princess was taken ill at Kensington on the 21st of December, 1694. Her distemper proved to be the small pox; a malady extremely fatal to her family, and which might therefore be supposed to make the greater impression upon her spirits; this, joined to a weakly constitution, and, as some say, the ill-management of her principal physician, brought her to an end in the space of a

QUEEN ANNE.

week. She died in the thirty-third year of her age, and the sixth of her reign. She was exceedingly lamented at home and abroad, and her death was a great disadvantage to her subjects.

William reigned seven years and three months after the death of Queen Mary, and on the 21st of February, 1702, as he was riding from Kensington to Hampton Court, his horse fell under him, and he himself was thrown upon the ground with such violence, as produced a fracture in his collar-bone. His attendants conveyed him to the Palace of Hampton Court, where the fracture was reduced by Ronjat, his sergent-surgeon. In the evening he returned to Kensington in his coach, and after lying in a languishing state till the 8th of March, he expired in the fifty-second year of his age and fourteenth of his reign. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

The Bank of England was established in this reign, and the first public lottery drawn.

XXIX.

CHARACTER OF QUEEN ANNE.

ANNE STUART, Queen of Great Britain, was in her person of the middling size, majestic and well proportioned. Her hair was of a dark brown colour, her complexion ruddy, her features regular, and her countenance round and handsome. Her voice was clear and melodious, and her presence engaging. She was,

QUEEN ANNE.

indeed, deficient in that vigour of mind by which princes ought to preserve their independence, and avoid the snares of flatterers and sycophants ; but the virtues of her heart were never called in question. She was a pattern of conjugal affection and fidelity, a tender mother, a warm friend, a munificent patroness, and a merciful queen, during whose reign no subject's blood was shed for treason. She was zealously attached to the Protestant Church, from conviction rather than prepossession ; unaffectedly pious, charitable and compassionate. In a word, she was undoubtedly one of the best and most unblemished sovereigns that ever sat upon the throne of England.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

QUEEN ANNE procured an act of parliament for building fifty new churches within the bills of mortality, with an augmentation of the livings of the poorer clergy. The union of the two kingdoms of England and Scotland took place in this reign. Since the accession of James the First, these nations had been under one sovereign, but remained separate and independent of each other, in all other respects. By the Act of Union which took place on the 1st of May, 1706, England and Scotland were formed into the *United Kingdom of Great Britain*, with one parliament, but Scotland retained her own laws, and her own form of church government.

During the reign of Queen Anne the honour of the British arms was carried to an amazing height, particularly by the Duke of Marlborough, who was first appointed General of the English forces, and afterwards

QUEEN ANNE.

Commander-in-Chief of the allied armies against France. He humbled the pride of France by a number of the most glorious victories, particularly at the battles of Blenheim, Ramilies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet ; and raised his military fame to the highest pitch of greatness. The nation being at the same time at war with Spain, the Duke of Ormond and Sir George Rooke took Vigo, when eleven French men-of-war were burnt, and ten taken. On the 24th of July, 1704, Sir George Rooke took Gibraltar, after a siege of two days. The next year the Earl of Peterborough took the city of Barcelona, and several other places in Spain.

WHIGS AND TORIES.—It was in the reign of Queen Anne that the disputes between the two great parties, known by the names of *Whigs* and *Tories*, begun to have a constant influence on the measures of government ; although the parties and their names had existed for a considerable time. These names, at first, were cant terms of reproach bestowed upon each other by the parties which divided the kingdom in the reign of Charles the Second ; but they gradually lost their offensive significations. The name of *Tory* came to be applied (by themselves as well as others) to those who especially desired to support the powers of the crown, and the establishment of the national church ; while the name of *Whig* was given to those who called for the extension of popular freedom, both in Church and State. The Whigs accused the Tories of wishing to exalt the power of the crown, at the expense of the just rights and privileges of the people ; while the Tories affirmed that the principles of the Whigs were inconsistent with the preservation of the established government and religion of the State.

GEORGE THE FIRST.

In 1711, the Duke of Marlborough was accused of having, while abroad, taken a large bribe from a Jew who had contracted to supply the army with bread, and was dismissed by the Queen from all his employments. In 1713, the famous treaty of Utrecht was concluded.

The queen was seized with a lethargy in the month of July, 1714, which, notwithstanding all the care of her physicians, increased so fast, that she died on the 1st of August following, at Kensington Palace, in the fiftieth year of her age, and the thirteenth of her reign. She was the last sovereign of the House of Stuart.

XXX.

CHARACTER OF GEORGE THE FIRST.

GEORGE THE FIRST was plain and simple in his person and address; grave and composed in his deportment, though easy and familiar in his hours of relaxation. Before he ascended the throne of Great Britain, he had acquired the character of a circumspect general, a just and merciful prince, and a wise politician, who perfectly understood and steadily pursued his own interest. With these qualities, it can scarcely be doubted but that he came to England extremely well disposed to govern his new subjects according to the maxims of the British constitution, and the genius of the people: and if ever he seemed to deviate from these principles, we may take it for granted that he was misled by the venal suggestions of a ministry whose power and influence were founded on corruption.

GEORGE THE FIRST.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

KING George the First succeeded to the crown of Great Britain on the death of Queen Anne. He was the eldest son of Ernestus Augustus, Duke, afterwards Elector of Hanover, or Brunswick-Lunenbourg, and was descended by his mother from King James the First of England. On September the 18th, 1714, he landed, with the prince his son, at Greenwich, and on the 20th, they made their public entry into London, and through the city to St. James's, attended by above two hundred coaches and six, of the nobility and gentry. The prince was declared Prince of Wales; the king was crowned on the 20th of October, and a new parliament met on the 17th March, 1715. In July the king gave the royal assent to an act for preventing tumultuous and riotous assemblies, commonly called the *Riot Act*, which is in force to this day.

A few months after George's coronation, a rebellion broke out, which was headed in Scotland by the Earl of Mar, who set up the standard of the Pretender, Prince James, son of James the Second, and proclaimed him King of Scotland. At the same time the Earl of Derwentwater and others appeared in arms in the north of England, and also proclaimed the Pretender. In November, they were attacked by the king's troops, commanded by Generals Wills and Carpenter, at Preston, in Lancashire, when, after a smart firing from the windows, finding all the avenues of the town blocked up by soldiers, they desired to capitulate; but no other terms being allowed them than submitting to the king's mercy, they, on the 14th, submitted. On the same day, the

GEORGE THE FIRST.

Duke of Argyle defeated the rebel army in Scotland, under the Earl of Mar, consisting of about eight thousand men. This battle took place at Sheriff-muir, about four miles from Aberdeen ; and the Earl of Mar, retreated to Perth, after an obstinate engagement, in which both sides claimed the victory, though Mar, being frustrated in his design of crossing the river Forth, showed that the king's forces had the advantage.

After the Pretender's friends in Britain had thus been defeated, he himself arrived in Scotland, attended only by six gentlemen. He was joined by the Earl of Mar, and expected the people would rise in his favour ; but in this he was disappointed, and finding his affairs desperate, he found means to escape to a French ship, and returned to France.

The rebels were treated with great severity. The Earls of Derwentwater and Kenmuir, several gentlemen, and others of inferior rank, were executed ; and above a thousand persons were transported to North America. Immediately after this rebellion, an act was passed which still remains in force, extending the duration of parliaments from three to seven years. This is called the *Septennial Act*.

In 1726, a war broke out with Spain, and an expedition, under Admiral Hosier, was sent to South America, to intercept the ships employed in conveying gold to Spain ; but it entirely failed. The Spaniards made an attempt to take Gibraltar, but they were unsuccessful, and a peace was soon afterwards concluded.

In 1727, the King set out on a visit to his Hanoverian dominions ; but was taken ill on the road, and died in his carriage near Osnaburgh, on the 11th of June, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and the thirteenth of his

GEORGE THE SECOND.

reign. His body was conveyed to Hanover, and interred among his ancestors.

XXXI.

CHARACTER OF GEORGE THE SECOND.

GEORGE THE SECOND came to the throne at the age of forty-four. He was a prince of rather low stature, but remarkably well shaped and erect, with prominent eyes, and fair complexion. In his disposition he is said to have been hasty, prone to anger, especially in his youth, yet soon appeased ; otherwise, moderate and humane ; in his way of living, temperate. He was fond of military pomp and parade, and personally brave. He loved war as a soldier : studied it as a science ; and corresponded on the subject with some of the greatest military characters in Germany. The circumstances that chiefly marked his public character were a predilection for his native country, and a close attention to the political interests of the Germanic body.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

Sir Robert Walpole, who in the former reign had been a principal leader of the Whig party, became the king's prime minister. The two great parties in the State now changed their names from Whig and Tory, and were called the *Court* and *Country* parties. The Court party supported the measures of Walpole's administration ; the Country party was in the opposition.

GEORGE THE SECOND.

The most frequent subjects of dispute between them, during this reign, were the increase of the national debt, and the number of troops that were kept in pay.

On the 27th of April, 1736, Frederick Prince of Wales was married to the Princess of Saxe Gotha. This prince was the father of King George the Third, and died in the life-time of his own father, in 1751.

THE REBELLION IN SCOTLAND.—In 1745, Charles Edward Stuart, the son of the old Pretender, resolved to make an effort to gain the British crown. Being furnished with money, and still larger promises from France, he embarked for Scotland on board a small frigate, accompanied by the Marquis of Tullibardine and some other desperate adventurers. For the conquest of the whole British empire, he brought with him seven officers and arms for two thousand men. He was joined by some of the Highland chiefs with their vassals, when he found himself at the head of fifteen hundred men; and with these he advanced to Edinburgh, which he entered without opposition. Sir John Cope, who commanded the King's forces, advanced to Edinburgh, and encamped at Preston Pans, a few miles from the city. He was attacked by the Highlanders, and defeated with the loss of five hundred men; while the rebels lost only eighty men. Had the Pretender profited by the terror and confusion produced by this victory, it might have had fatal consequences; but he trifled away his time in Edinburgh, and gave the government time and opportunity to oppose him effectually.

Charles now marched into England, and, after besieging and taking Carlisle, he advanced to Manchester, where he took up his head-quarters, and was joined by about two hundred English. From thence he proceeded

GEORGE THE SECOND.

to Derby ; but being disappointed in their expectations of succour from France, and fearful of being surrounded by the royal forces, the Highland chiefs and their clans, contrary to the wishes of the Pretender himself, resolved to return to Scotland. They accordingly retreated, leaving a garrison of four hundred men in Carlisle, which surrendered a few days afterwards to the King's troops.

The Duke of Cumberland, the King's son, who had arrived from Flanders, now put himself at the head of the army at Edinburgh, amounting to fourteen thousand men. With these he followed the rebels northward, and came up with them at Culloden, an extensive moor, in the neighbourhood of Inverness. Here Charles drew up his army, consisting of not six thousand men, to wait the attack of the Duke of Cumberland. The battle began on the 16th of April, about one o'clock in the afternoon : in less than thirty minutes the Scots were totally routed, and the field was covered with their dead bodies to the number of three thousand. The duke, immediately after the battle, ordered thirty-six deserters to be executed.

The conquerors made a cruel use of their victory. Quarter was refused, and many were slain who were mere spectators of the combat. Charles Edward escaped from the field, with a few followers, and had a course of adventures very similar to those of Charles the Second, after the battle of Worcester. He wandered for five months among the Highlands, and was frequently on the point of being taken ; but, though a reward of thirty thousand pounds was offered for his head by the government, and though he trusted himself to more than fifty persons, not one was prevailed upon by so great a temptation to betray him. He at last got safe on board a

GEORGE THE THIRD.

French privateer with a few faithful followers who had shared his misfortunes, and escaped to France.

Lords Balmerino, Kilmarnock, and Lovat, and Mr. Radcliffe (brother to the Earl of Derwentwater, who was beheaded in 1715) were beheaded. Many officers and gentlemen were hanged at Kennington Common, Carlisle, and York, and a considerable number of other persons were transported to North America.

A considerable portion of this monarch's reign was taken up by military and naval contests with France and Spain; in acquiring and securing dominion in the East Indies and North and South America; and protecting the king's Hanoverian dominions, and the States of Germany. In these contests, the British arms were universally successful. The king and his son, the Duke of Cumberland appeared in most of the military engagements on the continent, and were everywhere victorious. George the Second is the last instance of a King of England appearing personally in the field of battle.

On the 25th of October, 1760, his Britannic Majesty, George the Second, died suddenly, in the seventy-seventh year of his age, and the thirty-fourth of his reign. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

XXXII.

CHARACTER OF GEORGE THE THIRD.

IN speaking of the character of this monarch, a respectable historian has observed, that "In moderation,

GEORGE THE THIRD.

judgment, and vigour of intellect, he at least equalled the first George ; while in every other quality of the heart and of the understanding, he exceeded that monarch. In fact, it may be said that a more virtuous, paternal, and pious king never sat upon the British throne." And, that, " Arduous as were his trials ; long and momentous beyond former example as was the period of his reign ; no difficulty, no consideration was ever able to shake his firmness. In him was discovered no cruelty of ambition, no violent abuse of power, no profligacy of character, no forgetfulness of himself, no neglect of his subjects' interests ; on the contrary he exhibited the tenderest solicitude for the happiness of his people, a deep and becoming regard for his own elevated station, and the exercise of every quality which could adorn the man, and dignify the prince."

Another writer observes, that, " Though in the discharge of his arduous duties, during times of great difficulty and danger, his views may not have been uniformly sound, yet it is universally admitted they were sincerely and earnestly directed to the good of his kingdom."

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

GEORGE THE THIRD was twenty-two years old when he succeeded his grandfather. Mr. Pitt, the chief minister in the late reign, continued for a short time in office, and was afterwards created Earl of Chatham, and succeeded in the administration of affairs by the Earl of Bute.

THE RIOTS IN ST. GEORGE'S FIELDS. — Mr. Wilkes, who had long resided abroad, returned in 1768, and offered himself as a candidate to represent the City of

GEORGE THE THIRD.

London, though a sentence of outlawry against him had never been repealed. He lost his election, but immediately stood for Middlesex, where he was chosen by a great majority. He soon after surrendered himself, and was committed to the King's Bench prison ; in consequence of which, some very alarming riots took place in St. George's Fields : the military were called out, and some persons were shot.

Mr. Wilkes's imprisonment expired in 1771, when he was chosen one of the sheriffs for London and Middlesex, made an alderman, had his debts paid, amounting to twenty or thirty thousand pounds, was elected lord mayor, and afterwards chamberlain of London.

THE AMERICAN WAR.—The ministry, in order to relieve the people of Great Britain of a part of the burden of the taxes, resolved to tax the North American colonies ; and, in 1765, an Act was passed imposing stamp-duties upon them. This act was received in America with the greatest indignation. The colonists contended that, by the British constitution, the subjects cannot be taxed unless by the consent of their representatives in parliament, and that they, not being represented, could not be taxed. So great was the ferment, it was found necessary to repeal the act ; but at the same time another act was passed, declaring the right of parliament not only to tax the colonies, but to make laws binding on them in every case whatever.

In 1767, an Act was passed, laying a tax on tea and some other articles imported into the American colonies ; but in 1770, when Lord North came into power, this act was repealed with respect to all articles except tea. Lord North imagined that a tax of small amount would not be objected to ; but he did not sufficiently

GEORGE THE THIRD.

consider that it was the *principle of taxation* which the Americans resisted.

A general spirit of resistance now spread over the colonies in America. The government sent troops to enforce the execution of their claims. The colonists provided arms and military stores in different places for defence against the British troops; and an attempt to seize a quantity of these, produced a skirmish at Lexington, near Boston, on the 19th of April, 1775, in which a number, both of the soldiers and colonists were killed. Both parties now proceeded to open war. Thirteen of the colonies formed themselves into a Union, to be conducted by the delegates sent to the congress. George Washington, a Virginian gentleman, was placed at the head of the American army. On the other hand large bodies of troops under General Howe and Lord Cornwallis, were sent from England. At first, the British troops appeared to have the advantage; but General Washington soon found means to strengthen his army, and in 1777, a British army, under General Burgoyne, were surrounded by the American forces, and obliged to lay down their arms.

The success of the Americans induced France to join them against Great Britain. The English people now began to be discouraged by the ill-success of the war, and a motion was made in the House of Lords, that the troops should be withdrawn from America. This was opposed by the venerable Earl of Chatham, who was lifted from a sick-bed and carried to the house for that purpose. He had opposed the measures which led to the war; but he now protested against yielding to the dread of France. While engaged in this debate, he suddenly sank down in a fit, and was carried apparently

GEORGE THE THIRD.

lifeless out of the house. This striking scene happened on the 2nd of April, 1778, and this great statesman expired a short time afterwards.

The war with America was carried on without any remarkable event till the year 1781 ; but in October of that year, Lord Cornwallis was under the necessity of surrendering himself and his army to General Washington. From that time, all expectation of subduing America was at an end. They shortly afterwards declared their independence, by forming a government of their own, of which Washington was elected president.

LORD GEORGE GORDON'S RIOTS.—The year 1780 was remarkable for one of the most dreadful riots that ever happened in the City and suburbs of London. The origin of these disgraceful ebullitions of popular feeling may be traced to the passing of an Act of Parliament about two years previously, for "relieving his Majesty's subjects preferring the Romish religion from certain penalties and disabilities imposed upon them in the eleventh and twelfth years of the reign of William III." A Protestant association was formed, with Lord George Gordon at their head, who, alarming themselves with apprehensions of Popery, determined to excite the legislature to repeal the act so recently passed. A petition, signed by above a hundred thousand persons, was presented with due decorum to the House of Commons on the 2nd of June ; but in the course of the day several lords and commoners were insulted by the mob. The Sardinian and other Romish chapels were pulled down ; and such other outrages were committed, that it was found expedient to draw out the military, and to send five of the rioters to Newgate. Everything remained quiet on the king's birthday, which was kept on Satur-

GEORGE THE THIRD.

day, instead of Sunday, on which latter day another Popish chapel was demolished. On Monday, the fifth, a Popish school, three priests' houses, a library, and all Sir George Saville's furniture, were destroyed. On Tuesday the mob were so riotous in front of both Houses of Parliament that they obliged them to adjourn ; and in the evening, when the keeper of Newgate refused to deliver up the rioters, they set fire to his house and the prison, and liberated about three hundred prisoners, many of whom joined them. They then proceeded to the Bank of England, which they would have plundered had it not been protected by the military and the City association. In the evening Lord Mansfield, Sir John Fielding, and several private persons had their houses burnt or pulled down. The King's Bench, Bridewell, and Fleet prisons were destroyed. Fires were seen blazing in every part of the metropolis, and the lawless mob were exacting contributions from the citizens, while the magistrates, and even the ministry, viewed these scenes of desolation with an inactivity that was astonishing. At length, however, their spirit seemed roused : troops were called into London from all quarters, and stationed in every part of the town. This step effectually checked the progress of the rioters ; a great number of them were shot by the military, and others taken, tried, and executed. Lord George Gordon, who had been the chief instigator and leader in these outrageous proceedings was tried for high treason, but acquitted.

THE KING AND QUEEN OF FRANCE BEHEADED.—The year 1793 commenced with one of those awfully impressive events which are not often found in the annals of civilized nations—the putting a sovereign to death

GEORGE THE THIRD.

upon the scaffold. Louis the Sixteenth, of France, after a trial which terminated in sentencing him to lose his life, was guillotined on the 21st of January.

Again, in October, the public feelings were most sensibly affected by the trial of the Queen of France, on the 14th, and her execution on the 16th of that month.

MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.—The 8th of April, 1795, was marked by the marriage of his royal highness George, Prince of Wales, with her serene highness, the Princess Caroline, daughter of the Duke of Brunswick. On the 7th of January, 1796, was born her royal highness the Princess Charlotte Augusta of Wales.

THE UNION WITH IRELAND.—The year 1800 is remarkable for the union between Great Britain and Ireland, of a similar nature to the union of England with Scotland. The three countries were formed into one kingdom, and styled, "The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland;" and Ireland was represented in parliament by twenty-eight peers, and one hundred commoners. The union commenced on the 1st of January, 1801.

In the beginning of the year, 1801, Mr. Pitt, (son of the late Earl of Chatham), who had been for some time prime minister, resigned his situation, and was succeeded by Mr. Addington, afterwards Viscount Sidmouth. A treaty of peace between England and France was signed at Amiens, on the 25th of March, 1802. This event gave great joy throughout the nation; but the peace did not long continue, and Mr. Addington retired from office in 1804, and Mr. Pitt resumed his former station; but this great statesman died on the 23d of January, 1806.

GEORGE THE THIRD.

BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR.—Buonaparte having become Emperor of France, induced Spain to enter into an alliance with him, and to declare war against Great Britain ; and the two nations each fitted out a fleet to attack us by sea. This combined fleet for some time eluded the vigilance of the British cruisers. At length, our immortal Nelson, who had been anxiously seeking the enemy received the gratifying intelligence that they had put to sea ; and on the 21st of October, 1805, they appeared in the vicinity of Cape Trafalgar, presenting a line of thirty-three ships, of which eighteen were French and fifteen Spanish. The British hero had but twenty-seven vessels under his command, yet he rushed with noble impetuosity to the conflict ; caused his own ship to be placed alongside of his old acquaintance, the *San-tissima Trinidad*, and engaged the combined forces at the muzzles of their guns. The conflict was severe and obstinate ; but about three o'clock p.m., many of the enemy's ships having struck, their line gave way, and victory soon decided in favour of our gallant countrymen. Nineteen ships of the line (of which two were first-rates) were taken, and three flag-officers.

This brilliant victory, however, was dearly purchased, and the glories of the day were sadly overcast by the death of the gallant Lord Nelson, who received a musket ball in his left breast, about the middle of the action, and soon afterwards expired. His remains were interred in St. Paul's cathedral, January 9th, 1806.

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT.—The year 1810 was rendered memorable by the committal of Sir Francis Burdett to the Tower, by a warrant from the Speaker of the House of Commons, for a breach of privilege. The spirited *ironet* resisted the execution of the warrant, denying

GEORGE THE THIRD.

the right of the House of Commons to imprison him ; but at length force was employed, and on the 9th of April, he was conveyed to the Tower in a glass coach. London was in a state of riotous ferment for several days ; the military were called out, and in their progress to or from the Tower, an unoffending person was killed by a musket shot, whilst standing in the shop of a tradesman in Fenchurch-street. Sir Francis was liberated on the 12th of the following June.

In May, 1812, Mr. Perceval the prime minister, as he was entering the lobby of the House of Commons, was shot by a person of the name of Bellingham, from some motive of private revenge. The murderer was brought to trial, condemned and executed. Mr. Perceval was succeeded as prime minister by the Earl of Liverpool.

BATTLE OF WATERLOO.—In the beginning of 1815, Buonaparte, who, after his late abdication, had been permitted, under restraint, to retire to the Island of Elba, suddenly escaped from that place, and landed in France, where he was received with acclamations by the army. He proceeded without opposition to Paris, from which the King, Louis the Eighteenth, had fled, and immediately resumed the government. The Allied Powers prepared to invade France ; and Buonaparte proceeded with an army of a hundred and fifty thousand men, to meet them in the Netherlands, where the British and Prussian armies already were ; the British under the command of the Duke of Wellington, whose glorious victories over Buonaparte and the French armies, on the continent of Europe, had resounded throughout the world, and the Prussians under Marshals Bulow and Blucher. After several encoun-

GEORGE THE THIRD.

ters on the 16th and 17th, a general battle took place on the 18th of June, near the village of Waterloo, in which, after a desperate conflict, which lasted the whole day, the French army was completely defeated, and Buonaparte with difficulty saved himself by flight. He returned to Paris, but finding his situation hopeless he endeavoured to escape to America. Finding himself unable to avoid an English ship of war, he gave himself up to the English captain, and was by the Allies sent to the Island of St. Helena, in the middle of the Atlantic ocean, where he remained till his death, on the 5th of May, 1821. King Louis returned to Paris, and a new treaty of peace was concluded.

DEATH OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE. — In 1816, the Princess Charlotte of Wales, the heiress apparent to the crown of Great Britain, was married to the Prince Leopold of Saxe Cobourg. This union, in all respects a most happy one, was terminated by the death of the princess. She expired on the 6th of November, 1817; an event which was deeply lamented throughout the kingdom. Indeed the whole British nation mourned over this event, as one connected with domestic feelings. All public avocations, whether of business or pleasure, were suspended. In the metropolis the shutters of the principal shops were closed for the whole interval between the decease of the princess and her interment. Every person was intent on displaying the cause of public sorrow as that of his own bosom. The distress and consternation of the royal family was indeed extreme. Intelligence of the afflictive event reached the Prince Regent, her father, whilst he was engaged in a festive party at Sudbourn Hall, in Suffolk; and we may easily suppose that he received the

GEORGE THE THIRD.

melancholy tidings with pungent distress. The queen was at Bath when the tidings arrived. All the gaieties connected with her visit to that city, were immediately suspended; and her majesty, on receiving the awful intelligence, retired to solitude and reflection. The Princess was interred in St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

The day of the funeral was one of general mourning throughout the empire. It was, indeed, as it has been aptly described, "A day of voluntary humiliation and prayer, of cessation from business, and of sad and silent reflection on the instability of human greatness, and of all sublunary hopes."

"Now sear'd within the sad funereal urn,
With sable blazonry they bear the corse
Of lov'd Augusta to the mould'ring tomb;
The bell (dire harbinger of Albion's loss),
Responsive thrills through every Briton's heart,
And tells in solemn strains our princess dead.
Britannia weeps, and o'er the hallow'd spot
In pensive anguish heaves the bitter sigh!"

Her royal highness was in the 22nd year of her age. Her brief and innocent life made a deep impression upon the people over whom she appeared once destined to preside; and exhibited, in a striking point of view, the loveliness of moral excellence, and the proof that personal happiness and public esteem are most readily to be attained by the exercise of domestic virtues.

The Queen died on the 17th of November, 1818, at Kew Palace, and was buried in St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

The year 1820 had scarcely commenced when the British nation was once more involved in mourning, by the death of an amiable prince, and an aged and be-

GEORGE THE FOURTH.

loved monarch. His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, the father of her present majesty, died at Sidmouth in Devonshire, on the 23rd of January ; and the king, his father, died on the 29th of the same month at Windsor Castle, in the eighty-second year of his age, and the sixtieth of his reign.

XXXIII.

CHARACTER OF GEORGE THE FOURTH.

GEORGE THE FOURTH possessed, especially in the early part of his life, a graceful and handsome person, remarkably fine eyes, dark hair, and an engaging open countenance, that commanded esteem and admiration. He was noble and majestic in appearance, finely shaped, and had a robust and healthy constitution. His mental faculties were of the highest order ; courteous, affable, and eloquent, he excelled in the powers of conversation, and was unequalled in elegance of manners, refinement, and personal address. In the cabinet he displayed all the abilities of a politician with the discernment and sagacity of a legislator. He was, however, fond of show and parade, and much addicted to pleasure and extravagance, but at the same time, a munificent patron of the arts and men of letters. That this monarch possessed many faults, the common lot of mortals, cannot be questioned ; but that he also possessed many shining virtues, must as readily be *admitted*.

GEORGE THE FOURTH.

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

His majesty King George the Fourth succeeded to the throne on the 29th of January, 1820; but as the next day was Sunday and the anniversary of the martyrdom of Charles the First, he was not proclaimed till the 31st. On that day, however, his accession was publicly announced in London and Westminster, with the usual solemnities.

Immediately after the king's accession a plot was discovered, the object of which was to assassinate the whole of the cabinet ministers. At the head of this conspiracy was one Arthur Thistlewood, a man who had long rendered himself conspicuous by his inflammatory speeches at public meetings, and who had already been tried for high treason, but acquitted. The place of rendezvous was a loft over a stable in Cato Street, Edgeware Road, whence the conspirators were to proceed armed with muskets, pistols, swords, pikes, and hand-grenades, to the house of Lord Harrowby, where the cabinet ministers were to dine. One of them was to procure admittance as the bearer of some despatches, and the rest in a body were to rush forward, and commence their work of destruction. The whole of their plans, however, had been revealed to the privy council, and at the very juncture when their plot was ripe for execution, a strong body of police officers, aided by a party of the foot-guards, proceeded to Cato Street, and after an obstinate resistance, in which one of the police officers was killed, nine of the conspirators were secured. Thistlewood contrived to escape in the confusion, but was afterwards discovered and taken prisoner.

GEORGE THE FOURTH.

These infatuated men were soon brought to trial on a charge of high treason, when Thistlewood and four others were sentenced to death, and were hung and beheaded in front of Newgate.

QUEEN CAROLINE.—In consequence of various reports relative to the conduct of her majesty whilst Princess of Wales, and residing in Italy, a commission was sent out to Milan to collect evidence against her ; and on the accession of her illustrious consort to the throne of England, her name was erased from the Church liturgy, and she was informed that if she presumed to return to this country, judicial proceedings would be immediately instituted against her, but that in the event of her remaining on the continent, fifty thousand pounds per annum would be allowed for her support. Notwithstanding these threats and promises, however, she landed at Dover, on the 5th of June, 1820, and a few days after arrived in London. A “ Bill of Pains and Penalties ” against her, was immediately brought into the House of Lords, but it was so feebly supported, and her defence was so clear, so convincing of her innocence, and so ably conducted by Mr. Brougham and Mr. Denman, her counsel, that ministers determined to proceed no further in the matter. The feelings of the nation were so strongly in her favour, that the withdrawal of these proceedings caused the most lively joy to be exhibited in all parts of the kingdom.

A bill shortly after passed both Houses by which an annuity of fifty thousand pounds per annum was settled on her majesty ; but her majesty died on the 7th of August, 1821, in the fifty-third year of her age ; and in compliance with her own request, her remains were conveyed to *Brunswick*, and deposited in the tomb of her ancestors.

GEORGE THE FOURTH.

The coronation of King George the Fourth was solemnized on the 19th of July, 1821, with the utmost splendour and magnificence in Westminster Abbey. Nothing could exceed the grandeur of the spectacle, both in the Abbey and Westminster Hall, both of which were permitted to remain open for inspection for a considerable time afterwards.

On the 31st of July, his Majesty paid a visit to Ireland; and upon his return set sail from Ramsgate on the 24th of September, on a visit to Hanover.

In 1822 Mr. Peel became secretary of state in the place of Lord Sidmouth, who resigned. In the same year the Marquis of Londonderry terminated his life by his own hand, in a fit of derangement produced by over-fatigue and exertion of mind.

The year 1825 was a period of great commercial distress. Commerce had for some time been rapidly reviving, and a great spirit of speculation arose. The Spanish colonies in South America, having declared their independence, had obtained immense loans from the merchants and possessors of money in England. The sums thus lent were advanced under a mistaken belief of the wealth and tranquillity of these new states; but it turned out otherwise; they were unable even to pay the interest of these loans, and an immense amount of British wealth was thus lost.

At the same time innumerable projects were set on foot for gaining money at home, and companies were formed, into which the public rushed with the utmost eagerness. These companies embraced every branch of trade, from the most extensive manufactures down to the selling of milk and the washing of clothes, in London. This was attended with the most disastrous con-

WILLIAM THE FOURTH.

sequences. Almost every one of these projects was found to be visionary and ruinous ; and it has been computed that above *forty millions* of the wealth of Britain were, in the course of this year, thrown away in those different schemes.

The year 1829 is remarkable for the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act, a measure which had been for many years keenly agitated. It was introduced to the House of Lords by the Duke of Wellington, then prime minister, and to the House of Commons by Mr. Peel, secretary of state, both of whom had on all former occasions steadily opposed it. It received the royal assent on the 13th of April, 1829. The effect of this measure was the admission of Romanists to the enjoyment of nearly the same political rights as Protestants. This was the last great event of the reign of King George the Fourth.

The King had been rapidly declining in health from the beginning of the year 1830, and, after a painful and lingering disease, he expired at Windsor Castle on the 26th of June, in that year, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and eleventh of his reign.

XXXIV.

CHARACTER OF WILLIAM THE FOURTH.

WILLIAM THE FOURTH was deservedly beloved and admired by the British nation. In his youth he had served long and actively in the navy, and had acquired

WILLIAM THE FOURTH.

the plain, straightforward manners of the British sailor. With these he united much integrity of principle, and a kind and benevolent heart. His habits of life, and those of his amiable Queen, were simple, domestic, and economical ; but their economy in their personal expenditure was accompanied by a course of truly royal beneficence and charity. In the business duties of his high station he was sedulous and active, and is said even to have exceeded his father in those habits of regularity and dispatch for which that monarch was distinguished. Without being possessed of shining parts or great acquirements, he was endowed with much good sense, and actuated by the purest motives in the discharge of his duty. He will long be remembered by the endearing title of the "Sailor King."

HISTORICAL EVENTS.

ON the death of King George the Fourth, the succession to the crown devolved upon William Henry, Duke of Clarence, third son of George the Third, and eldest surviving brother of the late King. On the 28th of June, 1830, he was proclaimed by the title of **WILLIAM THE FOURTH** ; and his coronation, with that of his royal consort, **QUEEN ADELAIDE**, took place in September the following year.

Soon after the accession of William the Fourth, the Duke of Wellington and his colleagues, ministers of the late King, retired from office ; and a Whig administration was formed, at the head of which was the late Earl Grey.

THE REFORM BILL.—On the 1st of March, 1831, Lord John Russell brought into the House of Commons

WILLIAM THE FOURTH.

a bill to amend the representation of the people in parliament. This was the celebrated "Reform Bill," the objects of which amounted substantially to this: a number of the smallest boroughs were disfranchised, or, in other words, deprived of the right of electing representatives to sit and vote in the House of Commons, and others, which had formerly sent two members, were restricted to one; while, on the contrary, this right was conferred upon many larger towns which had not formerly possessed it, and the number of county members was considerably increased. A new electoral qualification was introduced in the boroughs; the power of voting for members of parliament being conferred on the occupiers of houses within the borough, of ten pounds yearly rent and upwards. In the counties the old qualification of property of forty shillings annual value was continued, with the addition (which was made, in the progress of the measure) of the occupation, as tenant, of land of the yearly rent of fifty pounds and upwards. These are the general features of the Reform Bill as it ultimately passed. It encountered, however, such long and determined opposition that the king at length dissolved the parliament. When the new parliament met, it was again brought in, and passed the House of Commons in September 1831, but was rejected by the House of Lords on the second reading.

A second bill, similar to the former, was again brought into the House of Commons and again passed; but the resistance in the Upper House was so powerful that the ministers, finding themselves unable to carry it through that House, tendered their resignations to the king. The situation of prime minister was offered to Sir Robert Peel, but he declined to accept it. In the

WILLIAM THE FOURTH.

meantime the country exhibited signs of great agitation, one remarkable indication of which was a *run* (as it was termed) upon the Bank of England, from which, in the course of two or three days, money was drawn to the amount of above a million sterling. At length, under these alarming circumstances, the ministers were prevailed upon to resume their places, and those peers who had hitherto resisted the Bill, withdrew their opposition. It then passed the House of Lords without further impediment, and on the 7th of June, 1832, received the royal assent, and became the law of the land.

Acts of Parliament were also passed for the total abolition of negro slavery in all the British dominions abroad ; a measure that was hailed with the greatest satisfaction by all classes of society, and for the government of British India. These were followed by an act for the reform of the municipal corporations in England and Scotland ; and another, which affected an entire change in the administration of the English poor laws.

In the beginning of 1837, the king's health began to decline, and a general debility was followed by dropsy. He lingered for several months, enduring his sufferings with great firmness and Christian resignation ; and at length expired on the morning of the 20th of June, 1837. He was interred in the Chapel Royal Windsor.

QUEEN VICTORIA.

XXXV.

QUEEN VICTORIA.

THIS amiable and illustrious princess is descended from a race of kings the most ancient of any in Europe. Her Majesty was the only child of Edward, Duke of Kent, (fourth son of King George the Third,) and the Princess of Saxe Cobourg Gotha. She was born at Kensington Palace, on the 24th of May, 1819, and ascended the throne of Great Britain on the 20th of June, 1837.

Her Majesty's coronation took place on the 28th of June, 1838; and her marriage with His Royal Highness Prince Albert, on the 10th of February, 1840.

May they continue to enjoy many years of uninterrupted happiness and felicity; and may their reign prove prosperous and glorious to the great nation over which it has pleased Providence to place them.

THE ROYAL FAMILY.

Queen Victoria	born May 24,	1811 9
Prince Albert	August 26,	1811 9
Princess Royal	November 21,	1811 0
Prince of Wales	November 9,	1811 1
Princess Alice Maud Mary	April 25,	1811 3
Duke of York	August 6,	1811 4
Princess Helena	May 25,	1811 6
Princess Louise	March 18,	1811 8

Regal Government of the Kingdom, Parliament, and Courts of Justice.

THE SOVEREIGN.

THE Sovereign, in his or her legislative and executive capacity, possesses great power. All the ministers of state, the judges, the dignitaries of the church, and the officers of the army and navy, are appointed by him ; and through them he enforces the execution of the laws. He is "the fountain of honour and the source of mercy." He only can raise to the peerage, and he alone can pardon a delinquent. Yet he cannot assign any pension to support the dignity he has conferred, without the assent of the House of Commons. The Sovereign alone can convoke, prorogue, or dissolve the parliament, proclaim war, and raise an army or navy ; but, without the assent of the House of Commons, he cannot raise a single shilling to defray the expenditure of such proceedings. This check is provided by the constitution, against monarchical ambition and extravagance. Next to the solemnity of a coronation, the principal display of the magnificence of the Court takes place at the Sovereign's drawing-rooms and levees, due notice of the holding of which is always given in the London Gazette, the only newspaper published by authority of the Government. On those occasions, the respects of the nobility, persons holding official situations, distinguished members of the bar or the pulpit, and officers of the army and navy, are proffered to the monarch.

PARLIAMENT.

On these days, also, it is usual to witness the introduction of several of the younger branches of distinguished families to the Sovereign, which, for females of high rank, is deemed a preliminary to their future visits and communication with the fashionable world. On the first presentation of the daughters of dukes, marquises, and earls, it was customary, till lately, for the queen consort, if there happened to be one, slightly to kiss their cheeks. The king formerly did the same. After this the queen presented her hand to be kissed. The custom now is, for the person presented to kneel, and slightly kiss her Majesty's hand. It is usual for ladies to send cards to the ladies in waiting, who, in that case, present the persons sending them. It is essential at all drawing-rooms and levees that the visitors be full dressed; that is, the gentlemen in the full costume appropriate to their various ranks, professions, and offices, or otherwise to wear the court-dress.

PARLIAMENT.

HOUSE OF LORDS.—The parliament is composed of the two Houses of Lords and Commons. The House of Lords consists of the lords spiritual and the lords temporal. The spiritual lords are the archbishops and bishops of England and Wales, and the archbishops and bishops of Ireland. The temporal lords are indefinite in their number, but consist of all the peers of Great Britain, in their several degrees of duke, marquis, earl, viscount, and baron; of the sixteen elective peers of Scotland; and of the twenty-eight elective peers of Ireland. No money bill, nor any other imposing taxes or duties can originate in the House of Lords, and when

PARLIAMENT.

such is sent up from the Commons, the Lords must agree to or reject it altogether, as the least alteration generally proves fatal to the bill.

In giving their votes the peers say "content," or "not content," beginning with the lowest and ascending to the highest rank. When both Houses have agreed to pass a bill, it cannot become law till it has received the royal assent, and that is always given in the House of Lords, either by the Sovereign himself or herself in person, or in commission by some of the peers; the latter is the most frequent practice. When the royal assent is given to a public bill of a general nature, the clerk says, "*Le roi le veut*," but if it has subsidies for its objects, the words are "*Le roi remercie ses loyaux sujets, accepte leur b n volence et aussi le veut*." If the bill is a private one, he says, "*Soit fait, comme il est d sir *." Should the Sovereign decline giving his or her assent, the clerk says, "*Le roi s'avisera*." Besides the share which this high assembly possesses in making laws, it is also a court of appeal from the judgment of all other courts of law, and its decision is final. It is likewise the supreme or highest court of criminal jurisprudence; and peers, for capital offences, or when impeached by the House of Commons, as well as commoners for high misdemeanours, may be tried in it.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.—The Lower House, or House of Commons, consists of six hundred and fifty-eight members, or representatives, of the counties, cities, universities, and principal towns of Great Britain and Ireland. In the Saxon times, the affairs of the kingdom were regulated in national councils called *Wittenagemots*, or assemblies of wise men, and such councils were by law to be held twice in every year; but the Commons of

PARLIAMENT.

England, as represented by knights, citizens, and burgesses, were not specifically named until the latter years of Henry III.'s reign, when Simon de Montford, Earl of Leicester, caused them to be summoned for the purpose of employing their influence against the arbitrary domination of the crown. In the 4th of Edward III. (cap. 14) it was enacted that "a parliament should be holden every year twice, and more often if need be;" and this continued to be the statute law, although frequently violated by our sovereigns, until after the restoration of Charles II., when an act was passed for "the assembling of and holding parliaments once in three years at least," which act was confirmed by William and Mary, soon after the Revolution of 1688. In the first year of George I., the then existing parliament, under the influence of the crown, enacted that they should sit for seven years. Many attempts have since been made to restore triennial parliaments, but without success; and our parliaments now sit for any period not exceeding a septennial duration. In the House of Commons the members sit promiscuously; but we occasionally hear of the opposition and of the ministerial benches, from the leading orators of each party sitting near to each other, and on different sides of the house. When a member speaks, he addresses the Speaker only, and is not allowed to speak a second time during the debate, unless in reply (if he was the mover of the question), or in answer to personal reflections, or in a committee of the whole house, into which the commons frequently form themselves for greater freedom. Forty members are requisite to form a house, nor can any business be commenced until that number is present. The usual time of taking the chair is four o'clock, P.M. The Speaker is elected from the body of

COURTS OF JUSTICE.

the members on the first day of the meeting of a new parliament. In voting, the words used are "yea" and "nay." In divisions, one party always quits the house, the number of each being counted by two tellers of the opposite side ; but to this there is one exception, viz. in committees of the whole house, when they divide by the "yeas" taking the right, and the "nays" the left of the chair. In general divisions, all the doors leading to the house and its lobby are locked until the numbers are ascertained. The vast powers of this important branch of the legislature, in making and annulling the laws, raising supplies, levying taxes, inquiring into and redressing grievances, &c., are of too lengthy a character to be detailed in this work.

COURTS OF JUSTICE.

COURT OF CHANCERY.—This is the highest court of judicature in the kingdom, next to the high court of parliament, and is of very ancient institution. The jurisdiction of this court is of two kinds ; ordinary and extraordinary. The ordinary jurisdiction is that by which the Lord Chancellor, in his proceedings and judgments, is bound to observe the order and method of the common law : and the extraordinary is that which the court exercises in cases of equity.

In the early annals of our jurisprudence, the administration of justice by the ordinary courts appears to have been incomplete. To remedy this defect, the courts of equity were established ; assuming the powers of enforcing the principles upon which the ordinary courts decide, when the power of those courts, or their modes of proceeding, are considered insufficient for that purpose.

COURTS OF JUSTICE.

of preventing those principles, as literally enforced by the ordinary courts from producing decisions contrary to their spirit, and becoming instruments of actual injustice in particular cases ; and of deciding on principles of universal justice, where judicial interference is necessary to prevent a wrong in matters in which the law is imperfect. The courts of equity also administer to the ends of justice, by removing impediments to the fair decision of a question in other courts ; by providing for the safety of property in dispute, pending a litigation ; by restraining the assertion of doubtful rights ; by preventing injury to a third person from the doubtful title of others ; by preventing an unnecessary multiplicity of suits ; by compelling, without pronouncing any judgment on the subject, a discovery which may enable other courts to give their judgment ; and by preserving testimony, when in danger of being lost, before the matter to which it relates can be made the subject of judicial investigation.

As it is the object of this court to administer direct justice in opposition to technical difficulties, it is necessary, in order to maintain a suit in chancery, to allege that the plaintiff, independent of any fault of his own, is debarred from obtaining relief by proceedings in the common law courts. All fraudulent transactions not cognisable in the courts of common law may be litigated in this court.

The Lord Chancellor is the only one of the judges of the land who is removable at the pleasure of the Sovereign ; and hence, being politically identified with the Ministry, there is usually a new Lord Chancellor with every change of the government. The mode of his appointment consists of the simple delivery of the great seal

COURTS OF JUSTICE.

of the kingdom into his custody. He takes precedence of every temporal peer, and is the Speaker of the House of Lords. In term time the Lord Chancellor sits in his court at Westminster Hall, but during the vacations he sits in Lincoln's Inn Hall, Chancery-lane.

The Master of the Rolls presides in his court at Westminster Hall, and in the court adjoining the Rolls Chapel, Chancery-lane ; but all his decisions may be appealed from to the Lord Chancellor. The more peculiar office of the Master of the Rolls is to take charge of the rolls or records of the pleadings, decisions, and acts of the Chancery courts, which are preserved as precedents whereby to decide in future cases.

There are also the courts of the Vice-Chancellor of England, and of two additional Vice-Chancellors, appointed especially to assist the Lord Chancellor in his judicial duties ; but from any of their decisions an appeal lies to the high court of chancery.

COURT OF KING'S, OR QUEEN'S BENCH.—This is the supreme court of common law in the kingdom, and it has cognisance of causes of almost every kind, civil and criminal. The court of King's Bench is so called because the king used formerly to sit here in person. This court consists of a Lord Chief Justice and four puisne judges. Its jurisdiction is so paramount, that it keeps all inferior jurisdictions within the bounds of their authority, and may either remove their proceedings to be determined here, or prohibit their progress below. To state its powers more particularly, this court is termed the *Custos morum* of the whole realm ; and, by the plenitude of its authority, whenever it meets with an offence contrary to the first principles of justice, and of dangerous consequence, if not restrain-

COURTS OF JUSTICE.

ed, it adapts a punishment proper to it. Into this court, inquisitions of murder are certified ; and *hæc* issue attachments for disobeying rules or orders.

On the plea-side, or civil branch, the Queen's Bench has jurisdiction and takes cognisance of all actions of trespass, or other injury, alleged to be committed *vi et armis*, as well as of actions for forgery of deeds, maintenance, conspiracy, and deceit, all of which being of a criminal nature, although the action is brought for a civil remedy, make the defendant liable, in strictness to pay a fine to the Queen, besides damages to the injured party. Yet even this court is not the *dernier* resort of the subject ; for, if he is not satisfied, he may remove his plaint by writ of error into the House of Lords, or Court of Exchequer Chamber, as the case may happen, or according to the nature of the suit, and the manner in which it has been prosecuted. This court also grants writs of *habeas corpus*, to relieve persons wrongfully imprisoned, and may admit any person whatever to bail.

The Court of Queen's Bench is removable with the person of the Sovereign ; and, accordingly we find that, in the reign of Edward the First, it even sat at Roxburgh, in Scotland, after Edward's conquest of that kingdom. For this reason, every process issuing out of this court is returnable wherever the monarch may be. Its sittings are at Westminster Hall, and Guildhall in the city of London. Few capital offences, except treasons, are actually tried at Westminster ; those committed in the city of London, or within the county of Middlesex, being proceeded against at the Central Criminal Court sessions, which are held at the Old Bailey twelve times a year, as a court of *oyer and terminer*.

COURTS OF JUSTICE.

miner, and gaol delivery, by her Majesty's commission to the Lord Mayor, those aldermen who have passed the civic chair, the recorder, and common serjeant, who are attended by the sheriffs of London and Middlesex, and by one, sometimes two, or even three, of the fifteen judges, who usually try prisoners committed for capital offences, forgeries, highway robbery and burglary. The prison for the civil offences of the Queen's Bench is the Queen's Prison, Southwark.

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS.—This is also one of the supreme courts now constantly held at Westminster, though in ancient times, as appears from Magna Charta, it was moveable. The jurisdiction of this court extends itself through England. In the city of London, one of its judges proceeds regularly, after term, to try *nisi prius* causes at Guildhall. It entertains pleas of all civil causes at common law, between subject and subject, in actions real, personal, or mixed; and it seems once to have been the only court for real causes. In personal and mixed actions, it has a concomitant jurisdiction with the Queen's Bench, besides an exclusive one in some particular cases that respect real property; but it has no cognisance of pleas of the crown, and common pleas are all pleas that are not such. To this court are attached five judges, created by letters patent; the seal is committed to the custody of the Lord Chief Justice. The serjeants-at-law usually lead in this court; and the Queen's serjeants precede all other counsel, except the attorney and solicitor-general.

COURT OF EXCHEQUER.—This is an ancient court of record, in which all causes relating to the revenue and rights of the crown are heard and determined; and where the revenues of the crown are received. The

COURTS OF JUSTICE.

Court of Exchequer, as a common law court, is inferior both to the Courts of Queen's Bench and Common Pleas. It was first established by William the Conqueror, but subsequently regulated and reduced to its present state by Edward the First. On its chequered cloth resembling a chess-board, which covers the table when certain of the Queen's accounts are made up, the sums are marked and scored with counters. Its present functions are two-fold, it being both a court of equity, and a court of common law. The court of equity is held in the Exchequer Chamber, when the Lord Treasurer, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Lord Chief Baron, and the four puisne barons are presumed to be present. The original business of the Exchequer was to call the king's debtors to account, by bill filed by the attorney-general, and to recover any lands or other profits or benefits belonging to the crown. On the equity side of this court the clergy were used to exhibit their bills for non-payment of tithes.

HIGH COURT OF ADMIRALTY.—This court is in Doctors' Commons. It takes cognisance of all maritime pleas, criminal and civil; the latter are determined according to civil law, the plaintiff giving security to prosecute, and if cast, to pay what is adjudged; but the former are tried by special commission at the Sessions House Old Bailey, by a judge and jury, a judge of the common law assisting. To this court properly belongs the cognisance of piracies and other crimes committed on the high seas.

ECCLIASTICAL COURTS.—These courts are also held in Doctors' Commons, where a college of civilians is established for the study and practice of the civil law. The courts held here are the Court of Arches, for appeals

COURTS OF JUSTICE.

from inferior ecclesiastical courts in the province of Canterbury; the Prerogative Court, for causes relative to wills and administrations; the Faculty Court, empowered to grant dispensations to marry, &c.; and the Court of Delegates, for ecclesiastical affairs. The causes of which these courts (the jurisdiction of which is under the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London) take cognisance and decide upon, agreeably to the civil and ecclesiastical law, are such as relate to blasphemy, apostacy, heresy, ordinations, institutions to benefices, celebration of divine service, matrimony, divorces, illegitimacy, tithes, oblations, mortuaries, reparations of churches, probates of wills, and various other matters connected with civil government.

The terms for the commencement and ending of causes in these courts, vary considerably from those of the courts of common law. The practitioners are of two classes, — advocates and proctors. The former, (having taken the degree of doctor of civil law) must petition the Archbishop of Canterbury, and obtain his fiat previously to their being admitted by the judge to practise as counsellors and pleaders. Both the judge and the pleaders wear a peculiar dress, according to the university from which they have their degree; the robes and hoods of those from Oxford are scarlet, lined with taffeta; but if from Cambridge, they wear white miniver, and round black velvet caps. The proctors (who appear in black robes and hoods lined with fur) exhibit their proxies for their clients, making themselves parties for them, draw and give pleas, or libels and allegations, in their behalf; produce witnesses; prepare causes for sentence, and attend the advocates with the proceedings. The Court of Arches sits in the

COURTS OF JUSTICE.

morning, the Courts of Admiralty and Prerogative in the afternoon, of every day during term.

In addition to the courts here enumerated, there are several others, namely, the Court of Bankruptcy, Basinghall Street; the Insolvent Debtors' Court, Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn; and the County Courts, for the recovery of small debts; all which have district courts in various parts of England and Wales, with separate and distinct jurisdictions.

In Ireland the courts of justice are precisely similar to those in this country; but in Scotland the supreme courts are called Courts of Session, presided over by Lords Justices, and regulated by different forms and proceedings.

The country assizes are held twice in every year, when the judges go the different circuits of the kingdom, and try civil actions, and prisoners committed to the county gaols for offences of any description. From the judgments given in these courts of assize, however, there is an appeal to the superior courts in Westminster Hall.

ERRATUM.

Page 39, Note 1, *for* 1509, *read* 1530.

.







23

—



•
•
•
•



